A Revised Commentary on the Book of Revelation

By

Rev. Dr Jeffry David Camm

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DEDICATION

This Commentary is dedicated to the Holy Spirit, who opens our spiritual minds, to reveal and understand the deeper meanings of your Holy Word, so that we can be the light into the world, pushing back the darkness, that deep darkness, which is ever increasing around us, as we draw closer, to the great and terrible day of the Lord.

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BACKGROUND HISTORY

To better understand the reason for the Book of Revelation, one must first understand how it fits into the Biblical timeline, of the Holy Word of God.

In approximately 33 AD, Jesus Christ was crucified, resurrected, and ascended into heaven, leaving His followers, to obey His last instructions given to them, as recorded in Matthew's gospel [Matt. 28:18-20] where Jesus commanded them to **"GO"** and **"MAKE DISCIPLES".** [Note ~ **not believers!**]

Jesus also promised his followers in Acts 1:8 **that they should remain in Jerusalem,** where they would receive power, when ***"the Promise from the Father",*** (the Holy Spirit) fell upon them. It is reported in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, that over 500 people saw Him after His resurrection, but sadly, "**seeing in NOT believing",** because only 120 obeyed, and remained for this miracle to take place.

We know that this took place in the Upper Room, on the Day of Shavuot (westerners call it Pentecost), where the Holy Spirit fell on the 120 followers, who had gathered in the Upper Room, as recorded in Acts Chapter 2.

ALL these commandments are ***"action words"***, requiring his followers to get ***"out of their comfort zones"*** and "**go tell people about the good news of Salvation ~ through Jesus Christ**."

This was immediately confirmed, when Peter, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, spoke boldly of what had taken place, and referring to what Prophet Joel had stated would happen; ***"in the last days", God would pour out His Holy Spirit on ALL Flesh, and old people would have dreams, and young people would have visions*** (Joel 2:28).

As a result of His anointed preaching, more than 3,000 men came to salvation in Jesus Christ that day. In the next sixty years, all-of the sacred writings, which now form part of the New Testament were written (except for Paul's Letter to the Church in Laodicea[1], which was included in the Holy writings until 1384 AD, [where it was included by John Wycliffe in his Bible translation into English], but then was later removed by "so-called scholars".)

During this time, Paul wrote his "Epistle Letters" to the various churches he handplanted, encouraging & correcting them, as necessary, until his martyrdom, in approximately 67 AD. An extract from Paul's letter to the Church in Corinth, is worth mentioning here.

[1] Referred to in Colossians chapter 4:16 and contained in Bibles (Even the John Wycliffe English Bible in 1384) but was later removed from further English Translations.

PAULS LETTER TO THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH [NLT TRANSLATION]

- *From: Paul, chosen by God to be Jesus Christ's missionary, and from brother Sosthenes.*
- *To: The Christians in Corinth, invited by God to be His people, and made acceptable to Him by Jesus Christ. And **To: All Christians EVERYWHERE,** whoever calls upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and (also) theirs.*
- *May God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, give you all-of His blessings, and great peace of heart, and mind.*
- *I can never stop thanking God for **all the wonderful gifts** He has given you, now that you are Christ's;*
- *He has enriched your whole life. He has helped you speak out for Him, and given you a **"full understanding of the truth!"** [now skip to verse 10].*

10. ***BUT,** dear brothers, I beg you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, **"to stop arguing among yourselves."** Let there be **real harmony,** so that [2]**there won't be splits in the church.** I plead with you **to be of one mind**, **united in thought**, **and [united in] purpose**.*

1. *For some of those who live in Chloe's house have told me of your arguments and quarrels, dear brothers.* **[THESE ARGUMENTS AND QUARRELS DO NOT GLORIFY JESUS CHRIST!]**
2. *Some of you are saying, "I am a follower of Paul; and others are saying that "they are for Apollos"; or "for Peter"; and some are saying 'they alone are the only true followers' of Jesus Christ'."*
3. ***And so, in effect, you have broken Jesus Christ into many (small) pieces!!!!***

If we fast forward 40 years, until the time that Jesus appears to Apostle John, we find an interesting situation. Jesus dictates the words through the Angel to Apostle John; and He is commanded to write them down, **for the correction of the seven existing churches and for OUR future reference.**

You will notice that the Church in Corinth is NOT INCLUDED in the seven churches to be evaluated

*I believe that is because, they heard Paul, through His letter, they understood that they had sinned against God, **by breaking Jesus into little pieces, and they REPENTED, and changed their ways**. As we read in chapters 2 & 3 of this book, each of the 7 churches are not only physical churches, **but also church ages, throughout history**.*

*Sadly, the Corinthian church, given all-of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, **never became a church age, where all-of the churches, were using ALL-OF THE HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS AVAILABLE TO THEM CORRECTLY!***

Sadly, the 20th century & the 21st century churches, ***have failed to learn from this important piece of scripture***, because we now have Christians claiming to follow; ***Luther, Calvin, the Pope, and/or the Wesley Brothers, and some other Christian groups claiming that "they are the only True Christians",*** while yet other churches claim that these gifts "are no longer valid in the church today," or worse even still, that they "come from the devil", not from God!

Just like in 1 Corinthians chapter 1, we must ask the same questions:

1. Did any of these people die on the cross for your sins? [NO!]
2. Were you baptised into any of these people? [NO!]
3. Then why are you following them, insteandof following Jesus Christ?
4. **Why have you broken Jesus Christ into many small pieces?** Remember, small pieces have small, or little power, so Satan and his principalities are easily able to come in and defeat "small parts" of the Body of Christ.

But a **"Unified Body of Christ"**, **with one accord, one plan, and one purpose**, cannot be defeated by the enemy. The church has been given Holy Spirit power, to pray into the heavenly

[2] This same instruction applies to the whole Body of Christ today!

realm, of the second heaven, (where Satan resides), and defeat him there, in any situation faced by the Body of Christ.

Therefore, we have to pray for the church to become united in these last days; in its plan, and purpose ~ the plan and purpose, that Jesus Christ, the head of the Whole Body, wants to be activated in your city right now, for His glory!

After Paul was beheaded, Apostle John became the "senior Pastor" of the Church in Ephesus, before He was boiled in oil, and then exiled to the Isle of Patmos, to work in the salt mines, because they could not kill him with an oil bath.

God Almighty is a God of order, not of confusion, and He promised that the Holy Spirit shall lead us into ALL truth. In Jeremiah 31:31 God Almighty promised that the Holy Spirit would teach us, so let us put our faith in the promises of His Word. So now, with a little bit of historical and spiritual background, let us all dig into this Book of Prophecy ~ **which is "History" written in advance!**

CHAPTER ONE ~ THE PAST
OVERVIEW:

1. In the Book of Revelation there are references to the "unveiling", "revealing" or "uncovering" of signs and events, which;
   1. HAVE ALREADY TAKEN PLACE
   2. ARE PRESENTLY TAKING PLACE [about AND100], or
   3. WILL TAKE PLACE – IN THE FUTURE [after AND100 & until Jesus Christ returns an reigns in His new kingdom, on a NEW EARTH].
2. Therefore, the Bible (the Divine Word of God), is God Almighty's way of "unveiling", "uncovering", "manifesting", "revealing", and "an appearing" of His plans and purposes, for all of mankind to read, contemplate, and understand.

3. The Book of Revelation is in fact history being written, BEFORE IT COMES TO PASS.

4. As we study significant parts of God's word, we will be continually challenged to review our present positions and relationship with God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and His Holy Spirit. This will be a **significant challenge** for many of us ~ because many of us HATE TO CHANGE!!!
5. Notice that the first four (4) letters of the word "significant" is ***sign***. I trust that as you study this module, you will be challenged to go back and study God's Word and identify the many ***signs*** and ***wonders*** that are revealed to us through His Word and by the revelations of His Holy Spirit.
6. Therefore, through this divine revelation may there be a subsequent transformation within your spirits to the things of God, ***because transformation cannot occur without there first being a revelation from God.***

WHO WROTE THIS BOOK?

Before we look at the seven churches themselves, let us try to find out on whose authority the book was written, and for what purpose, and to whom.

The author of the book of Revelations is clearly defined in Rev. 1:1. ***It is the divine Word of Jesus Christ Himself***, *sent down to Apostle John, by an angel,* to record it for all time, for us, the churches in Asia and for all churches, of all denominations, in all the countries of the world (for all generations).

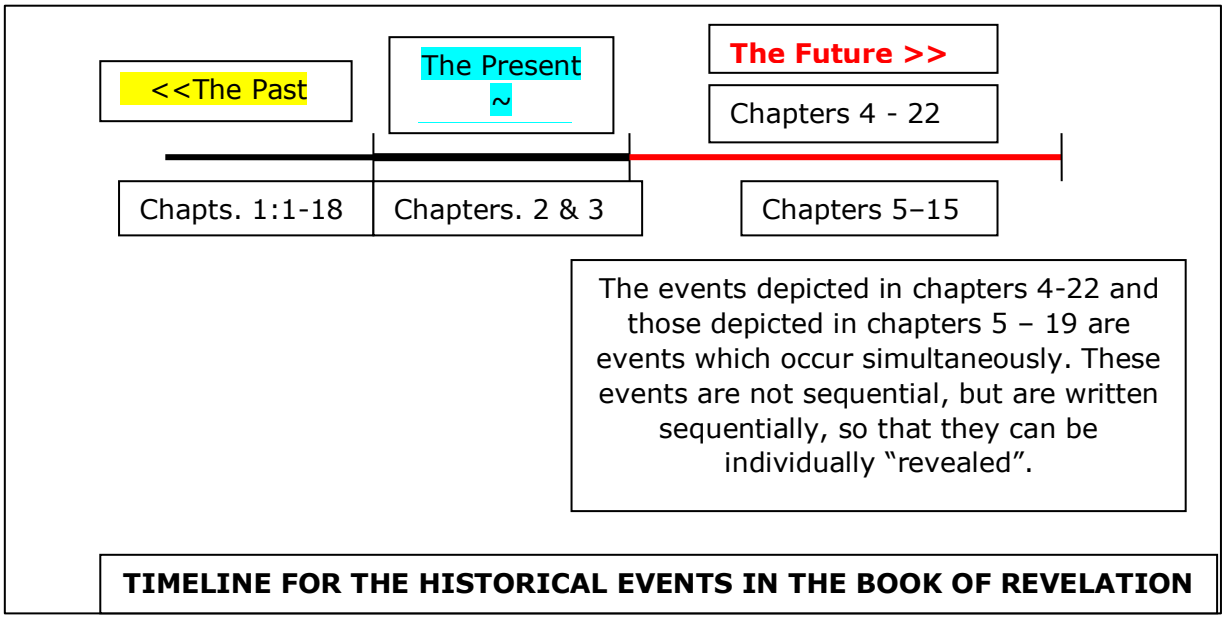
The writer was Apostle John, and the book is thought to have been written in AND90-100, some 60 years after the ascension of Jesus Christ our Lord into Heaven. It was written whilst John was in exile on the Isle of Patmos, for continuing to preach the gospel, after he had been forbidden by the laws of that land in Ephesus at that time. For continuing to preach the Gospel when it was forbidden by the law of the land, John hand been "boiled in oil", but it did not kill him, so he was exiled to the Isle of Patmos to work in the salt mines.

At this time, [AND90-100], He is the only remaining disciple alive, who was with Jesus and was "an eye witness" to the miracles and teachings given by Jesus during His ministry time here on earth.

It is a series of several visions, some which tell about the past, some about the present (at AND100), and some about future events, which will take place before the return to earth of Jesus Christ, in all His glory, to sit on the throne, on earth of His new earthly kingdom.

The following diagram, illustrates the sequence of events laid out for us in the Book of Revelation. The main point to grasp is that the chapters in this book are not in chronological order. Some of these events happen simultaneously, but they were revealed to Apostle John as separate visions, so that he could accurately record them for our benefit.

Therefore, as the diagram shows the events described in chapters 4-22 are happening in parallel with those happening in chapters 5-19.



So now, let us start to study God's Holy Word and receive its "revelation."

V 1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants, things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John;

We must begin our study, by recognising immediately that the noun is "revelation", (singular), not "revelations", (plural). This term comes from the Greek word ***Apokalupsis*** *~ which means* ***"an unveiling,*** *or* ***"an uncovering"****.*

This same word has been translated in other places in scriptures to be as follows;

(a) as a ***"manifestation"*** *(Romans 8:19),*

(b) as a ***"coming"*** *(1 Corinthians 1:7),*

(c) as a ***"revealing"*** *(2 Thessalonians 1:7), and*

(d) and an ***"appearing"*** *(1 Peter 1:7).*

The Book of Revelation therefore, concerns the **"unveiling" or "appearing"**, of our precious Saviour, The Lord, Jesus Christ. It is NOT the unfolding of the story of St. John the Divine, as portrayed in some Bibles, and some denominations!

Secondly, we see that this revelation was given to Jesus Christ, as is everything, for Jesus said; *"all things are delivered unto me of my Father* (Matthew 11:27). These things are presented unto Jesus Christ *to shew unto His servants, things which must shortly come to pass.*

The term "*shortly"* in the original language means, "rapidity of action ~ once there is a beginning". This certainly pictures the present hour that we live in, when signs pointing to His return, are beginning to appear with alarming frequency. These truths then, are sent and **"signified"** by Christ's angel unto John, the writer of the book, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

[Notice that the first four letters of the **"Signified"** spell **SIGN]**. Why? The Book of Revelation is a study of **SIGNS.** There is the **sign** of the Holy Spirit, presented as the Seven Spirits before the Throne (verse 4) and the **sign** of the seven golden candlesticks, and the seven stars (verse 20). Thus, through **SIGNS**, we come to an understanding of this gloriously revealed portion of scripture.

V 2. [John] bare record of the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all the things he saw.

V 3. Blessed is he that reads*, and* ***they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.***

This verse proves that the apocalypse IS NOT some deep mysterious, confusing book. ***God would not be an omniscient, all-knowing God, if He promised a special blessing to those who read, hear, and keep, what they hear, if they were unable to comprehend the truth in His Holy Word.*** No, the Book of Revelation IS understandable, and fills the heart of believers with joy, once one sees its glorious message concerning the Saviour.

One of the main reasons that readers and hearers are to keep that which they have heard, is because the time of Christ's return is near at hand!

The words "*at hand"* means "imminent". NEAR and IMMINENT are not synonymous. **Imminent** means "impending". Hence, this "event" could happen immediately, (while I am writing this study), or within 10 minutes, 10 months, or 10 years. "Imminence" is always the meaning of ***at hand*** *when speaking about the return of the Lord.*

For examples;

Romans 13:12 says, the night is far spent, the day is at hand (imminent ~ it will be coming shortly, exactly on time!).

Philippians 4:5 declares, let your moderation be known unto all men, The Lord is at hand.

And 1 Peter 4:7 *says, but the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.* Thus, the next event on God's calendar, is the return of Jesus Christ, for HIS CHURCH, and it may happen momentarily. That is why we, as Christians, should keep our eyes fixed heavenward, *looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious "appearing" of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* (Titus 2:13). Jesus is coming! His arrival is imminent ~ exactly on time, according to God's appointed timetable ~ not ours!

Now God Almighty has commanded all members of church leadership, **to read and teach, this book to their congregations**, so that **their congregations can; Hear, Understand, and Keep the words which are written in this Book.** It would be a very selfish leadership, who refused to do this, thus preventing God Almighty from giving a blessing to their congregation members.

V 4. John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the Seven Spirits which are before his throne;

Apostle John now focuses his attention on seven local churches located in a land called Asia. This is NOT the Asia as we know it today, but more likely a part of modern-day Turkey. Only seven churches are mentioned, although evidence clearly shows that there were more in existence at that time in history. **Seven** is God's number of perfection! These seven churches also give us seven different word pictures, of different physical and spiritual conditions, ***reflecting the history of God's people, throughout the Church Age.***

God's salutations, found in nineteen of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, is also present here as well; ***Grace be unto you, and peace.*** It is not "peace and grace", but "grace and peace", because that is God's program for sinners. Sinners cannot have peace, until He has shown them His loving grace. God must first show His unmerited favour and love, (called "grace") before anyone can experience God's everlasting "peace". This grace is shown to the world by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary, and is freely bestowed upon all who believe, and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. *For by grace are you saved through faith: and not of yourselves: it is a gift from God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. (Titus 2:11). When grace has done its job, then peace follows; *Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace through God our Lord Jesus Christ.* (Romans 5:1) This peace is made *through the blood of His cross* (Colossians 1:20). Thus, Romans 15:13 states; *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; that you may abound in hope, through the power of the holy Ghost.* **Only Jesus can give this peace!**

An unsaved Psychiatrist is unable to do the job. Psychiatrists need that same peace that they strive to give others. Thus, we must turn our problems over to the Son of God. We also find that this message of grace and peace is from the entire Trinity. Firstly, from the Father, which is, which was, and which is to come; then the Seven Spirits, which are before throne (a designation of the Holy Spirit, in all His holiness, for seven means perfection) …

V 5. And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that has loved us, and washed us from our sins, in His own blood.

The question is often asked; "Why is Jesus Christ referred to as 'the first begotten from the dead,' when Lazarus and others were raised back to life first?" The answer is simple if you think about it; they were raised from physical death back to physical life, but then they died again: they died a second physical death.

Jesus Christ was raised from death to life; in fact, He was raised to immortality, never to die again. He rose again to put on a new immortal body, as the "first fruits of the resurrection." [Acts 26:23] and to immortality. [1 Timothy 6:16]

It is recorded "Five times" that Jesus Christ is the 'first begotten', or the 'first-born from the dead.' Another "five times," He is called "the only begotten." The term "only begotten" refers to His incarnation, whereas "first begotten" (or firstborn) refers to His resurrection. For example:

He bringeth in the first begotten into the world. (Hebrews 1:6) [Christ] *is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature,* (Colossians 1:15). *And He is the head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead: that in all things He might have the pre-eminence* (Colossians 1:18).

Romans 8:29 declares: *For whom did he foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed into the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.* Meditate on these verses carefully, so that no cult member can trip you up on the terms "first begotten" and "firstborn", in their attempts to make the eternal Christ have a beginning. NO, Praise God, *Christ is from of old, from everlasting* (Micah 5:2).

The Lord Jesus Christ, is also called the *Prince of Peace* (Isaiah 9:6) and when He returns to earth as *the KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS* (Revelation 19:16). This glorious event will be the fulfilment of Psalm 2:6, which states: *[I have] set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.* At that time *the Lord Jesus shall have dominion also from the sea to sea; and from the river unto the ends of the earth* (Psalm 72:8).

V 6. And [He] has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

The two previous verses (5 & 6) contain three glorious statements concerning Christ's work on our behalf. (1) He loved us, even before we knew Him; (2) He washed US FROM OUR SINS in His own blood; and (3) He has made us kings & priests unto God and His Father. The order is beautiful. Let us examine it in deeper detail.

First, Jesus had to love us "past tense", in order to wash us and make us kings and priests. However, the love of Jesus does not remain in the past tense; it is also in the "present tense"; Jesus continues to love us NOW. He continues to love all those that He has washed in His blood. This is why John 13:1 triumphantly declare; [Jesus], *having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.* Can you understand such love? Oh, that *you maybe able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge* (Ephesians 3:18-19). This love is forever. (Past, present & future tenses). That is why Paul declared in Romans 8:37-39: *NO, in all-of these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

The love which Christ has bestowed upon each and everyone of us who are born-again believers, should manifest itself in our daily living, showing that we are no longer "believers", but are in fact "disciples", for He said to His own: ***A NEW Commandment I give unto you****; that you love one another; I have loved you; that you also love one another. By this shall ALL MEN KNOW that you are my disciples, if you love one another.* (John 13: 34-35).

This love for you and me brought Christ from Heaven's glory to the cruel cross on Golgotha's Hill. LOVE made him shed HIS blood for the remission of OUR sins.

Secondly. He washed us! Some denominations do not like the teachings about the blood They want to "earn their way into heaven" by their own good works. However, being "whitewashed" is not the same as being *"washed white".* There is a vast difference between these two statements! It is not LESS toil that solves this difficulty, it is NO toil at all. Listen to what God says: *It is NOT by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to HIS mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration. (*Titus 3:5). When one trusts in the merits of Christ's shed blood; his sins are gone, *as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions (sins) from us* (Psalm 103;12).

Isaiah declares, *Thou, has cast all my sins behind thy back.* God says, *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins,* (Isaiah 44:22). Yes, He has cast all of our sins *into the depths of the seas* (Micah 7:19). Oh, come to Jesus and He will lift all-of your loand~ He will take all-of your burdens. Here is proof! *To him give all-of the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins* (Acts 10:43). It does not matter how far the son or daughter has strayed away from God, *the blood of Jesus Christ [GOD's] Son cleanses us from all sin* (1 John 1:7)

Thirdly, because of his love and the washing of regeneration, Christ is able to make us *kings and priests unto God and his Father.* In this reference "PRIEST" refers to "EVERY BELIEVER". It is also the reason why one does not need a minister to "help them" get closer to God. IF you have been born again, your ARE a Priest in the eyes of the Almighty. You can bring your own petitions directly to God. One is not heard more rapidly because he has been ordained by men, for all born-again believers are on the same level. All are members of *a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that [we] should shew forth the praises of him who has called [us] out of darkness, into His marvellous light.* (1 Peter 2:9). What a calling! Thank you, Jesus. John then adds; *To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.*

V 7. Behold, he comes with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindred of the earth shall wail because of Him, even so, Amen.

This verse announces the Lord's Return to earth. Notice that "every eye shall see Him". That is why this great event is described as the "REVEALING," or THE "REVELATION" of Jesus Christ and this even occurs when He comes as the KING OF KINGS AND THE LORD OF LORDS; as described in Revelation 19:11-16. This in NOT His "appearing in the clouds" as referred to in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

Thus, our text is actually a preview of what will happen in the future, when Jesus returns with His Saints (The Bride of Christ) in Chapter 19. Isn't it exciting to know that when *the lightning comes*

*out of the east, and shines even unto the west (*Matthew 24:27), that every eye will witness this spectacle of the ages? Notice that there will also be a group of Israelites ~ a special group ~ that will also observe this momentous even, *for they shall look upon [him], whom they have pierced* (Zechariah 12:10).

Furthermore, when He does come in His power and His glory to smite the nations, *all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.* This is because He comes for judgement and NONE will escape Him. As Apostle John envisions the hour when *the Lord comes with 10,000 of His saints* (Jude 14) He victoriously cries out: "AMEN! AMEN!"

The Greek word for "even so" is "AMEN"'; and "AMEN" is the Hebrew word for "even so". John is literally crying out praises to God in two languages as he says: "AMEN AND AMEN, He is coming!"

V 8. I AM Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the ending, says the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

This scripture speaks of the eternal Christ. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, (which also match up with Alif and Tua in the Hebrew alphabet) Christ is saying; "I AM the beginning and ending of all things". He uses the title "I AM", which is a verb of being ~ not becoming. *All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made* (John 1:3). *For by Him all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, (both) visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.* (Colossians 1:16-17). He also controls all things *by upholding all things by the word of His power* (Hebrews 1:3), and He will consummate all things as well (See Ephesians 1:10). Yes! Jesus Christ IS *Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the ending.*

The terminology, *I AM …. The LORD which is, and what was, and which is to come,* expresses Christ's oneness with the Father (See verse 4). In fact, He adds the term, The Almighty, a name used with the Father, in connection with His person. This term is used 48 times in the Old Testament. This verse clearly refutes the doctrine of anti-trinitarianism, which is ant-God, anti-Christ, and anti-Holy Spirit.

V 9. I, John who am also your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle of Patmos, for the Word of God. And for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

John realises that he is an old man and highly revered and respected, yet he does not want any praise from men for his sufferings. He immediately identifies himself as a brother-in-Christ, and a companion in heartache and suffering. He tells of the tribulation he endured during his incarceration at Patmos, but he rejoices that the other blood-bought sons of God will miss the Tribulation. How True!

The Saviour stated: *In this world you shall have tribulation* (John 16:33). However, this does not include the Tribulation Hour, because the saints are not in the earth at that time (see Revelation 3:10). John's persecution came because of His devotion to Christ.

NOTE: if you are not being persecuted for your stance for Jesus Christ, then Satan is not worried about you, and because you are not really threatening his territory. Selah! Stop! Pause! And think about that!

This is always true when one takes a stand for the Saviour. Jesus said in John 15:18-20, *If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you: If you were of the world, the world would love his own; but because you are not of the world, but I HAVE CHOSEN YOU OUT OF THE WORLD, therefore, the world hates you. Remember the word that I said unto you; the servant is not greater than His Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.*

V 10. I was in the Spirit, on the Lord's Day, and heard a voice behind me, a great voice, as of a trumpet.

Beginning with this verse, we enter into the revelation experience with John, and observe first-hand all that is presented to him throughout the rest of this book.

John A. Seiss says that John was fast-forwarded in a vision through time and the centuries until he came to the vision of the great and terrible day of the Lord – which we refer to today as the Tribulation Hour. However, a majority of scholars believe that the phrase, "*on the Lord's Day,"* refers to the first day of the week. John is visited by the One who had loved him on the earth ~ Jesus Himself. As He appears, John hears the trumpet-like voice of Christ …

V 11. Saying, I AM the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what you see, write in a book, and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

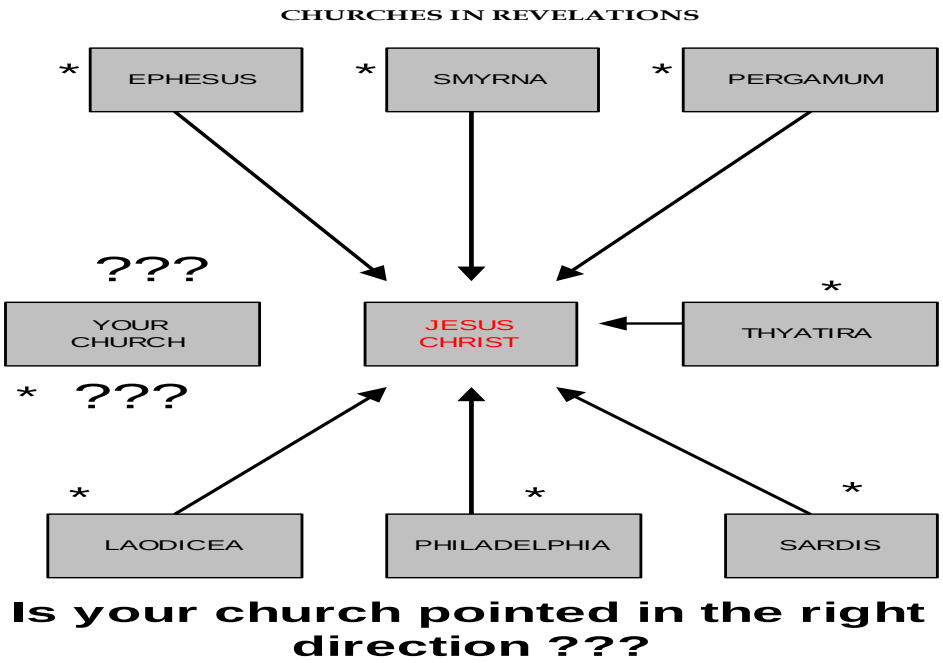
Alpha and Omega are the titles mentioned and discussed in verse 8. Verse 11 pictures the eternal Christ giving instructions to His beloved servant, concerning the seven churches mentioned in verse 4 and discussed in detail in chapters 2 and3. Then John adds:

V 12. And I turned to see the voice that spoke to me. And being turned I saw seven golden candlesticks.

When the trumpet-like voice sounded in verse 11, John turns "to see the voice", that has just spoken to him. This is different! One does not usually turn around to "see a voice", yet is recounts that John turned to "see a voice". Did He recognize the voice of Jesus? Maybe ~ but instead, he sees seven golden candlesticks (or lampstands).

Verse 20 clearly explains the meaning of verse 12 as follows: *The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven golden candlesticks [means this]: The seven stars are the seven angels, of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which you saw; are the seven churches.*

The fact that the seven churches are pictured as seven lampstands is significant, because believers *are the light of the world.* (Matthew 5:14). Sad, as we will see, as we further study this book, is that the history of these seven churches often diminished that light. As the churches leadership of the seven churches failed to make the light grow brighter, I pray that it does not become diminished in your personal life, because Jesus said: *let your light shine before men, (so) that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven.* (Matthew 5:16). Now let us come to realise that Jesus, our glorious Saviour appears in the midst of the lampstands or churches, not afar off. He is right there, as the focus of our attention. **Is your church pointed in the right direction?**



V 13. And [I saw] in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about with the paps with a golden girdle.

John sees the Lord, clothed in the garments of the Old Testament high priest, (which He is) because He is risen and He is in heaven, performing His ministry of intercession (for us). For this reason, *He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them* (Hebrews 7:25).

Thus, sixty years after Christ's death and resurrection, John sees Him as the High Priest (of the Order of Melchizedek) in the heavenlies. Paul also testified to this blessed fact by stating: *Seeing that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our profession.* (Hebrews 4:14) In the next verses Our Lord is described in detail.

V 14. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes as flames of fire:

John's description speaks of antiquity, and coincides with the vision that Daniel had, as described in chapter Daniel 7:9-13. This *Ancient of days, the Eternal One, Jesus Christ*, is also pictured in terms of whiteness, because of His righteousness, for *He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, a d made higher than the heavens.* (Hebrews 7:26). The Greek also emphasises the fact that His eyes, "shot out fire". Christ is righteously angry concerning the sin of the churches depicted in Revelation, chapters 2 and 3.

V 15. And His feet [were] like unto fine brass, as if they were burned in a furnace: and His voice [was] as the sound of many waters.

Christ's feet picture judgement and relate to the events that take place when He returns to the earth, as described in chapters 19 and 20. *His voice as the sound of many waters* also depicts judgement.

V 16. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in His strength.

The seven stars of this verse are the angels (or messengers) of the seven churches (see verse 20), while the two-edged sword is the Word of God, as described in Hebrews 4:12: *The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to diving asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart., and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart.* Then the expression, *His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength,* takes our minds back to the transfiguration scene of Matthew 17:2 and thus pictures the glory of Christ, who is to be the JUDGE during the Great Tribulation Hour, Armageddon, and the Great White Throne assembly in Revelation 20:11-15. Because of it, John is stunned, astonished, and humbled, at this experience and cries out ….

V 17. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me; Fear not; I AM the First and the Last:

V 18. I AM He that lives, and was dead; and, behold, I AM alive for evermore, Amen: and (I) have the keys of hell and of death.

The sight of the glorified Christ was breathtaking, and the one who laid his heandupon Jesus at the Last Supper now falls prostrate at His feet. As John falls before his blessed Lord in fear, Jesus lovingly says, *Fear not!* Jesus is saying exactly the same to us today. In the midst of wars, rumours of wars, heartaches, and death, the blessed Lord says: *Let not your heart be troubled* (John 14:1).

This message to John is from *the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega,* the Eternal One, Jesus Christ. The One *that lives (resurrection), and was dead (crucifixion)* and who cries out, *behold I live for evermore (ascension), Amen.* He also has the keys of hell and death. [NOTICE Peter does not have the keys (as stated by "some churches")]. Because of this tremendous fact, Christians are not to fear, for *through death … [Christ destroyed] him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and [delivered] them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

(Hebrews 2:14-15) Not only have we been delivered from "the fear of death," but from "the fear of Hades" as well.

Let me explain: "Hades" was the place where souls and the spirit of all humans went until the cross. "Sheol" (Old Testament) and "Hades" (New Testament) are one and the same place. In Sheol and Hades were two compartments, one for the wicked, and another one for the righteous. In Luke 16:22-23, the rich man and Lazarus went to the respective assigned places ~ the rich man to suffering, and Lazarus to comfort. The thief on the cross beside Jesus, went to the comfort side, (or paradise), as promised by Jesus when He said, *Today, shalt thou be with me in paradise* (Luke 23:43). This is the place that Jesus went after His death, (Acts 2:27,31). It was there that He ministered to His people and *led captivity captive* (Ephesians 4:8-10), literally releasing them for their entrance into the third heaven, described in 2 Corinthians 12:2.

Presently the comfort of Hades has been emptied by Him who has the keys of death and Hades (hell), but the torment is still full (and getting larger every day).

This will be emptied for the Judgement Day when … *death and* [Hades deliver] *up the deandwhich [are] in them: and they are judged.* (Revelation 20:13).

V 19. Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter:

This verse clearly gives us the order of the Book of Revelations, which is written chronologically, or as the event actually happen. One immediately recognises the three tenses, namely past, present, and future. *Write the things which you have seen* ~ Past, (Chapter 1); *the things which are* ~ present, chapters 2 & 3, *and the things which shall be hereafter* ~ the future, chapters 4 through 22.

V 20. [God explains to John:] ***The mystery of the seven stars which thou saw in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which you saw are the seven churches.***

Since we have discussed the closing verse of this chapter, (the past) in connection with verse 12, let us now move on and study the seven candlesticks, or the history of the seven churches (and the seven church ages).

CHAPTER TWO ~ THE PRESENT

Introduction:

Chapters 2 and 3 contain seven letters to the seven literal, geographical churches, mentioned in chapter 1, verse 11. The letters have a number of applications;

First: They are seven actual letters, to seven actual churches, situated in seven different cities; with seven different histories and cultures.

Secondly: They are letters addressed to seven different individuals within these seven churches.

Thirdly: They are messages applicable, TO ALL CHURCHES, in all the ages (of history), for the seven churches picture seven periods, or seven stages, of church history. In each period, the Lord speaks to the churches in a judgemental way, **portraying their failures**, then He calls them to **REPENTANCE** and **ZEALOUSNESS.**

FIRST STAGE: THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS

V 1. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things says He that holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in-the-midst-of the seven golden candlesticks [or the seven churches represented throughout history.]

The first addressed is the church of Ephesus, covering the time period from approximately 33 A.D. (the birth of the church at Pentecost) until 100 AND (a period of about 70 years) when John, who wrote this Book of Revelation died.

The letter is to the "angel or, literally, the "messenger" of the church of Ephesus, and is from the One who holds the *seven stars in His right hand and who [walks] in-the-midst-of the seven golden*

candlesticks. This is of course, the glorified Christ, as we learnt in chapter 1 verse 20. Notice that the Lord not only holds the churches (all-of the believers) in His hand, but He also walks in-the-midst-of them, as well! This is the Christian's security. The Saviour's walk among us, is to bring us into a closer walk and relationship with Him. Then, Jesus speaks >>>

V 2. I know thy works, and thy labours, and thy patience, and how you cannot bear them which are evil; and you have tried them which say that they are apostles, and are not, and has found (to be) liars.

Notice, that in each of the seven letters, the Lord begins by commending the local assembly for whatever He can find in them that is good, before scolding them for their sins. Remember, this church was planted by Paul, and then John was the senior pastor here, after Paul's death, before He exile to Patmos. The Ephesus church began in all purity, as can be observed in the Book of Acts. Then false prophets entered in**.** This is exactly the warning that Paul handsounded during his last gathering in Ephesus: *For know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch and remember.* (Acts 20:29-31). The church leaders judged these false prophets in earlier days, but became lax, as they lost their first love.

In today's churches, many think it is wrong to judge heresy, or wickedness. **NOT SO!** The same Jesus Christ who said, *Judge not, that you be judged* (Matthew 7:1) also declared; *Judge righteous judgement* (John 7:24). Now some fools may rush in and say that these two statements are contradictory, but that is not the case. A believer in never to judge a person as far as motives are concerned. However, He should definitely judge one when that individual's doctrine is heretical, or his life is filled with wickedness. This is why John said: *Try the spirits, (to determine) whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.* (1 John 4:1), and why Paul stated in 1 Timothy 5:19-20: *Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin* ***REBUKE BEFORE ALL****, that other may fear. The church at Ephesus handslipped from its original moorings and was on the way down. Is it any wonder that Islam swept through the land and destroyed the compromising church that once was mighty under Paul?*

V 3. And has borne, and has patience, and for my name's sake has laboured, and has not fainted.

Part of the reason that this church (who had *borne, & had patience, and for my name's sake, has laboured, & has not fainted;* they may have failed because they were too busy serving and not taking time for sweet one-on-one fellowship at the feet of Jesus. When one is so active that he has no time for the Bible and prayer; He is too busy. Many have fallen into this trap of *Satan.*

V 4. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against you, BECAUSE YOU HAVE LEFT (NOT LOST) YOUR FIRST LOVE.

How true for multitudes today! When they first got saved, they loved Jesus, loved to pray, loved to read the Word, loved to attend the services at God's house, and they loved to witness to others. Ah, but they have now lost their first love!

V 5. Remember therefore, from whence you have fallen, and REPENT, and do the first works (again); or else, I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove your candlestick (or your local church) out of his place, except you repent!

It happened! After the Islamic conquest, to that region, the church of Ephesus became non-existent. Do not let this happen to YOUR CHURCH, or to you! Before God finishes His pronouncement of commendations and condemnations upon the Church at Ephesus, he adds…

V 6. But this thou hast, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

Who were the Nicolaitans, and what was it about them that so angered Almighty God? The term comes from two Greek words, which means "victory over the laity"; a religious dictatorship that allowed little or no freedom to its members. This is precisely what the Holy Spirit had in mind, when He told the church elders not to be lords over God's heritage, but …. Examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:3). How this message needs to be emphasized in our day, as religious leaders try to

impose their man-made rules on each and every member. After presenting this series of commendations and warnings, the Spirit of God adds…

V 7. He that has an ear, let him hear, what the Spirit says unto the church; to him that overcomes will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in-the-midst-of the paradise of God.

How can one be an overcomer? By trusting in the merits of the shed blood of Jesus Christ; who is He that overcomes the world? but He that believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (1 John 5:5).

SUMMARY

CHURCH AT EPHESUS

GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	GOOD POINT FOUND BY JESUS
1	INDUSTRY
2	ACTIVITIES
3	LABORIOUS TOIL
4	PATIENT ENDURANCE
5	NO CORRUPT MEN
6	TESTS ALL TEACHINGS – to make sure that they line up with God's word.
7	PROCLAIM CHRIST ALWAYS
8	HATE THE NICOLAITANS

CHURCH AT EPHESUS

BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS
1	ABANDONED FIRST LOVE, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST – THIS CHURCH IS GETTING SPIRITUALLY COLD
2	FALLEN FROM ORIGINAL HEIGHTS AND LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST

CHURCH AT EPHESUS

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS STATED BY JESUS CHRIST

TO GET BACK INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

ITEM	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS STATED BY JESUS
1	REMEMBER YOUR FIRST LOVE - WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST
2	REPENT OF YOUR SINS - ASK FORGIVENESS FROM GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
3	CHANGE YOUR INNER WILL - CLEANSE YOUR HEART FROM UNRIGHTEOUSNESS
4	TURN BACK TO GOD
5	FOLLOW HIS CHOSEN PATH

CHURCH AT EPHESUS

PROMISES TO ALL REPENTANT BELIEVERS IN THIS CHURCH

ITEM	PROMISES IF YOU REPENT
1	GOD PROMISES THAT ALL REPENTANT BELIEVERS SHALL EAT OF THE TREE OF LIFE, WHICH IS IN HEAVEN. THESE PEOPLE ARE PROMISED ETERNAL LIFE FOREVER WITH JESUS CHRIST - IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD THE FATHER.

CHURCH AT EPHESUS

CONSEQUENCES TO THOSE WHO DO NOT REPENT OF THEIR SINS IN THIS CHURCH

ITEM	CONSEQUENCES IF YOU DON'T REPENT OF YOUR SINS
1	JESUS WILL VISIT YOU PERSONALLY AND REMOVE THE LAMPSTAND FROM YOUR CHURCH. THE LIGHT WILL BE EXTINGUISHED. THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL DEPART FROM THE CHURCH, AND ALL BELIEVERS WHO DO NOT REPENT SHALL NOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ~ AT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

In today's world, one would think that a church doing all these "**GOOD DEEDS"** would be acceptable to God, as it, Preaches, Teaches, Tests the Word of God, etc.

But in the **EYES OF JESUS CHRIST**, who is given **ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH**, **this is not enough!**

The fact that this is a church, which has started to grow cold in its spiritual walk with the Lord, **is enough to exclude it from Heaven!**

But we see that **God is MERCIFUL**. He does not leave the finding of the corrective actions, or solutions to us.

He gives us the ingredients to correct each individual believer in the Ephesus, (or spiritually dying church). Jesus leaves the decision on whether to change or not, up to each individual believer.

It is not the responsibility of the pastor, or the elders anymore, **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER IN THE CHURCH, TO REPENT AND TURN BACK TO GOD AND GOD'S CHOSEN PATHWAY, FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN.**

As John the Baptist exhorted the Jews to repent of their sins and turn from their wicked ways (as individuals) and be baptised, so the Holy Spirit is exhorting the individuals in this church to do the same; return to their first love.

SECOND STAGE: THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA

V 8. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things say the first and the last, which is dead, and is alive.

We saw in chapter 1, verse 11, that the reference to the first and last, or *Alpha & Omega,* is the Lord Jesus Christ. He now begins His message to the church of Smyrna.

V 9. I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty (but you are spiritually rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan.

The Smyrna period of church history takes us from 100 AD to 312 AD. These people suffered the greatest persecution in all Christianity. Their works, faithfully performed in the name of Jesus, brought great tribulations and accompanying poverty, materially. However, great spiritual riches were laid up for them in heaven. In addition, their relentless, dedicated efforts brought the Word of God to the entire Roman Empire. During the second and third centuries, the Smyrna church members were fed to the lions at Rome while satanic multitudes cheered. Church history informs us that five million may have been martyred during this era. Every Christian should read Foxe's *Christian Martyrs of the World*[3]. He will quickly discover the foolishness of complaining in this day of luxury and ease.

Believe it or not, the church flourished and grew during the Smyrna period of persecution! Perhaps a little persecution would do us all some good today! We might learn to love our brothers in Christ, who have a different religious label than ours. God, please forgive us for our sectarianism! We must remember that Jesus died for them, just as He did for us. Much of Smyrna's heartache came through false professors of religion ~ those who said they were Jews as defined in Romans 2:29 (circumcised *of the heart & the spirit* rather than *the letter)* but who, in reality were not!

They really did not believe and were actually members of the synagogue of Satan. Beware of those who claim to be Christians, but deny the deity of Christ. They too, are of the synagogue of Satan. [For] *every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God (1 John 4:3).* The same is true of those who mix law and grace. Paul said: *I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again; If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed* (Galatians 1:6-9).

Because of the false brethren, propagating false doctrine and despising the true believers, persecution came from within the church and from the satanic world. In the face of such satanic opposition, Christ's message was:

V 10. Fear none of those things which you shall suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you maybe tried (tested); and you shall have tribulation for ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.

When the hour of trial arrived, the believers were not to fear. They were to keep their eyes on eternal rewards, as mentioned in James 1:12. *Blessed is the man that endureth* [testing]*: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him.* Many Bible scholars believe that the ten days of persecution consisted of ten literal periods of suffering. I agree, since church history emphatically supports this assertion. Still, the church of Smyrna was guaranteed final victory through the Lord's promises, power, and provision.

V 11. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches; He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.

[3] https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/299716

SUMMARY

CHURCH AT SMYRNA

GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS
1	GOOD POINTS TO NOTE AND TO PUT INTO PRACTISE EVERY DAY.
2	SUFFERED AFFLICTIONS, DISTRESS, TROUBLES, POVERTY.
3	WERE SLANDERED AND REVILED BY FALSE CHRISTIANS.
4	PROCLAIMED GOD'S WORD UNDER ALL CONDITIONS - EVEN UNDER THE THREAT OF TORTURE AND DEATH BY THE LEGAL AUTHORITIES OF THAT DAY AND AGE.

CHURCH AT SMYRNA

PROMISES TO STEADFAST BELIEVERS

WHO BELONG TO THIS CHURCH?

ITEM	PROMISES TO STEADFAST BELIEVERS BY JESUS CHRIST
1	PROMISED THE CROWN OF LIFE IN HEAVEN AT THE TIME OF JUDGEMENT.
2	GOD PROMISES NO INJURY BY THE SECOND DEATH.

The church of Smyrna is a very special church. It has afflictions, distress, pressing troubles ~ and poverty. It has been reviled and slandered against, by "so called Christians", who were really backsliders, again under the domination and power of Satan.

The people had been tortured, thrown into prison, and even killed, because they continued to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. All of these things did not cause their faith to begin to crumble, because it was securely anchored to the giant rock of salvation, Jesus Christ Himself.

As we study this church, we see that when we commit our lives to Jesus Christ, our PHYSICAL LIVES are no longer of any value, (if we try to keep them). It only becomes of value to us if we are prepared to offer it up as a sacrifice to Him, not worrying about the physical pain or troubles, but being determined to preach God's Word, wherever we go, despite the consequences[4].

The other important thing to notice about this church type is that, **in the eyes of Jesus Christ**, this church, and all the believers who are in it, they are acceptable to Him. **It has no faults!!!!!**

Conclusion: The church of Smyrna is an acceptable church type, in the eyes of God, but not all Christians have the faith, nor the spiritual maturity, to be able to trust the Lord completely, in the times described above, that this church had to face.

But all of us - SHOULD BE ABLE TO PASS THE TEST OF THIS CHURCH TYPE, IF WE REALLY WANT TO GLORIFY GOD IN OUR DAILY LIVES.

[4] As a missionary, I have had personal experiences to these events, having been spat upon, beaten, tortured, falsely accused, and put into prison, FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

THIRD STAGE: THE CHURCH IN PERGAMOS

V 12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things says he that has the sharp sword with two edges:

Again, chapter 1, verse 16, proves that the speaker in the Lord Jesus Christ.

V 13. I know thy works, and where you dwell, even where Satan's seat is; and you hold fast my name, and have not denied my faith; even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwells.

The letters to the first three churches always begin with the commendations. To each Jesus Christ says: *I know thy works.* God sees what we do for Him. How sad when backsliding destroys the many "good deeds" performed in His name! We see this strange twist at Pergamos. Here, the bad works outweigh the good ones!

This church period, extending from 312 AD to 606 AD, was one of materialism, self indulgence, and worldliness. Wickedness spread like a bushfire. The name ***Pergamos*** has in it the same roots from which we get our English words ***bigamy*** & ***polygamy****.* Pergamos signifies the "mixed marriage" of the church and the world. This happened because the Babylonian religion established its headquarters at Pergamos and infiltrated Christianity. No wonder this local church is charged with dwelling in the area of Satan's seat or literally, "throne". They were perched on the doorstep of the devil's headquarters!

Of necessity, the believer in Christ is in the world. However, he must constantly guard himself against becoming involved in its ungodliness. The church of Pergamos became part and parcel of Satan's worldly establishment. They called themselves by Christ's name (Christians) and made written and verbal assent to the faith, even though they saw the danger of martyrdom in the examples of Antipas. Nevertheless, they backslid.

V 14. But I have a few things against thee; because you have there that that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel; to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication.

The first grievance against the church in Pergamos was the face that they embraced the pleasures of the world, or become a "worldly church". Secondly, they had given heed to false doctrines ~ the theology of Balaam. Remember Balaam? He had a smart donkey! How sad to become famous because people remembered you, because you had a smart donkey. The animal was so smart it could out-talk Balaam. What was the doctrine of Balaam that was taught to Balac? First, *to eat things sacrificed to idols,* and second, *to commit fornication.*

Balac had hired Balaam to curse Israel, and Balaam, *the false prophet,* was unable to get the anointing of Satan upon his spirit for the task. So, he figured a plan of destruction for the Jews.

He said, "Let the choice of the women of Balac's kingdom display themselves before the eyes of God's people." As expected, the Jewish men became enamoured with the beauty of the daughters of Balac's kingdom, committed fornication with them, married them, and were eventually drawn into idolatry. How wrong! Those who name the name of Jesus are not to become involved with the world in ANY MANNER [for] *you cannot drink the cup of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils* (1 Corinthians 10:21). [or as it says in the lyrics of a song: *"You can't run with the devil, and walk in the Promised Land".*

V 15. So has thou also them that hold to doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Not only were the people of the first church of Pergamos worldly, sinful, and idolatrous, but they also shared in the wicked practise of Nicolaitanism, as did the church in Ephesus. This, again, is ecclesiastical Hitlerism. It is when the minister or leader says, "I am the head, and you have no choice in the matter," allowing laymen no voice in the affairs of the church. Concerning the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, the condemnatory statement, *which I hate,* is uttered by the Lord Himself. The solution? God never expects us to work out the answers ourselves. He is perfect, so He always gives the Church perfect solutions to their problems.

V 16. REPENT: or else I will come unto the quickly, and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth.

This is serious business! The Christian is not to close his mind, heart, or ears to God's warnings!

V 17. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches; to him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone, a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it.

As previously mentioned, the overcomer is the true disciple of Jesus (see 1 John 5:4). He is given *hidden manna* (the Word of God) and is presented with *a white stone.* During ancient court trials, the jurors would lay white stones to signify an acquittal. Praise the Lord, through the blood of Jesus, the white stones of acquittal have been presented and every Christian has a new name written down in glory!

SUMMARY

CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**Living in Satan's city – but not part of Satan's activities.**
2	**Holding fast to Christ in all situations and under all conditions.**
3	**Not denying the faith - even to prevent torture and death.**
4	**Martyrs among you - People who are ready to die for the gospel.**

CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**Some teach things of the world (false doctrines.)**
2	**Some teach eating food set before Idols.**
3	**Some practising sexual acts which are contrary to God's Word.**
4	**Others are teaching wrong doctrines, from the Courts of the NICOLAITANS - the ones who corrupt the people.**

CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS SPECIFIED BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS DEMANDED BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**REPENT - Change your will and attitude to God - or Jesus Christ will come and fight against you with the sword of truth, and you will not be able to stand against the attack from God.**

CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

PROMISES TO OVERCOMERS BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	PROMISES TO OVERCOMERS BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**Eat Hidden Food (Heavenly Manna)**
2	**Given a white stone with a new name written upon it.**
3	**No-one understands the name - except those who receive it.**

CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE WHO DON'T REPENT

ITEM	CONSEQUENCES FOR ALL WHO DON'T ACT ON GOD'S WORD
1	**Jesus shall destroy the church with the sword.**
2	**He will not allow it to stand and be a bad witness for Him.**
3	**All who are destroyed shall no enter the Kingdom at the time of the eternal judgement of all mankind.**

The church type of Pergamos (Pergamum) is unfortunately like many churches in the world today; they do not bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, in their present form.

You may consider this a strong critical statement, but let us look at the facts. I will leave the Holy Spirit to prompt you in your decision, as to the correctness of my comments.

First of all within this church there were divisions, **[NO UNITY]** with some spiritually mature Christians trying to follow the Word of God. In addition to this, we handsome of the newer believers (and some of the older ones) still clinging to traditions from worldly situations, which is contrary to God's Word.

When we become "born again" believers, the Word says we become new creations; old things (all of them) pass away.

The church also handsome people teaching doctrine which was contrary to the Word of God, and trying to encourage the believers to eat food which had been offered to idols and/or other gods.

There were also in the midst of the congregation, people who were practising corruption and fornication. All of these things were wrong in the eyes of the Lord. (And it still is today!)

The following things are important to note about this church type, and the warning given by Jesus to the believers who belong to this church.

This warning should prompt some action from all of us.

First of all, Jesus identifies that there are **"good Christians"** and **"bad Christians"** attending the same church.

We know that light and darkness cannot mix, nor can sweet water and salt water come out of the same well, at the same time.

Therefore, we would expect that the Lord would recommend some sort of separation process, (if we use secular logic) to protect the "good Christians" whilst the Lord dealt with the "bad Christians" in the congregation.

But that is not the case, that is not the way that Jesus deals with His followers.

Jesus said if the **WHOLE CHURCH DID NOT REPENT** (good and bad Christians alike) then Jesus would come and fight against them with the sword of His mouth, which we know is the Word of Truth.

Jesus considers that the 'good Christians' are just as guilty as the 'bad Christians', because the 'good Christians' failed to test the Word being preached, and when it was determined that it was incorrect teaching, **they FAILED TO ACT AND HAVE THE BAD TEACHING STOPPED.**

Also, the 'good Christians' FAILED TO STOP THE CORRUPTION, which was obviously apparent in the church congregation, or in the worldly situation around them.

This is a very important lesson for the Church body at large to realize. In the eyes of Jesus Christ, you cannot be judged blameless if you become one of the 'silent majority,' who is not involved themselves, in the wrongdoing, but DO NOTHING ABOUT HAVING IT STOPPED!

This is very important now in this 21st century setting, where we have governments introducing legislation which is clearly contrary to God's laws. **"The Church" has to do something about this**; **otherwise Jesus will judge the church accordingly.**

1. Abortion laws
2. Same-sex marriage laws
3. "Safe School" programs, just to name three that immediately come to mind.

Jesus considers inactivity, to not correct (take action against) something that is wrong, as a sin and **all are collectively guilty** (both the "good Christians and the "bad Christians), for allowing the sin to remain in existence.

To the churches in AUSTRALIA; this comment is very relevant. For over 200 years the churches have been building up barriers among the congregation, not removing false teachings, and some traditional practises (from the worldly point of view) from within their congregations.

These stumbling blocks have prevented the Holy Spirit from being able to move in the midst of the **COLLECTIVE CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**, because of jealousy, pride, envy, competition, accusation of 'sheep stealing', corruption in the land, etc. which has been allowed to remain by the Church at large, within "the Body of Christ".

I challenge the COLLECTIVE CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA, to consider the judgement of Jesus Christ upon the church of Pergamum. He has stated that He shall come and fight against you (Jesus shall fight against you personally) with the sword of truth.

We all know that nobody has ever been able to defeat Jesus Christ in a spiritual battle. Even Satan, who is far greater than us, (in spiritual terms) was unable to win in his several and continual battles against Jesus.

We are told to quote the Word against Satan and he shall flee from us. This indicates how powerful the Word really is. If Jesus Christ uses that same Word against us, then we will surely be destroyed, not just the 'bad Christians' but also the 'good Christians' who were part of the silent majority who did not do anything to correct the situation and bring the churches into unity under the sovereign reign of Jesus Christ.

Remember 2 Chronicles 7:14 [IF] ….. [THEN] ~~ A conditional Promise from God.

I will leave you to pray to Jesus Christ for forgiveness, and to ask the Holy Spirit to identify the things which needs to be corrected in the churches, so that the 'good Christians' are not destroyed along with the 'bad Christians'.

FOURTH STAGE: THE CHURCH OF THYATIRA

V 18. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass;

Once again, we see that the speaker is the Son of God. The description of His eyes were discussed in chapter 1, verses 14 & 15.

V 19. I know thy works, and charity, and services, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and the last to be more than the first.

To this point all four churches have been complimented for their works. Thyatira, however, was loaded with meritorious service and unusual deeds. She was known for her good works, love, service, faith, patience, and last works. The term "last works" means that this church out did herself. Her works became greater towards the end of her lifetime, than they were at the beginning.

Historically, Thyatira covers the years 606 AD to 1520 AD. However, many scholars believe that this church is found in the world, until she is destroyed by the "revived" Roman Empire in chapters

17 & 18 (which means that this church is still be operation today). Although Thyatira has many admirable qualities, she nevertheless has some deep-rooted problems as well.

V 20. Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee; because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

Who was Jezebel? In the Old Testament, she was perhaps the most wicked woman of her day. She became so hated that she was thrown from a window, and the dogs ate her flesh. The sin of this self-appointed false prophetess was to bring Baalism into Israel as a new religion. She is accused of seducing God's servant to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. This constituted the breaking of two of God's commandments to His people, Israel.

1. Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in the heavens above, or that is a in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shall not bow down thyself to them: and

2. Thou shall not commit adultery. (Exodus chapter 20: 4,5,14).

God called upon Thyatira to "turn from her wicked ways."

V 21. I gave her space to repent of here fornication; and she repented not.

The long-suffering and loving God gave Thyatira approximately 1,000 years to do what is right, but she resisted. How like many 20th century Christians, constantly rejecting the wooing's of the Blessed Holy Spirit. The result …

V 22. Behold, I will cast here into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they REPENT of their deeds.

Judgement always comes: *Be sure that your sin will find your out. (Numbers 32:23) The Lord promises to cast this church and her bed partners ~ those who have partaken of her abominable iniquity, including idolatry, and unfaithfulness to the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ ~ into Great Tribulation. At this point, the "church which sits upon seven hills (see chapter 17 verse 9) will be destroyed. The details concerning this event are discussed in detail in chapters 17 & 18.*

The obvious lesson here is that GOD HATES SIN! Sentimentalists say, "oh, the blessed, loving Jesus would not condemn anyone." Really? WE know that *God is love.* (1 John 4:8) and *God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world* (John 3:17). Nevertheless, when His love is repeatedly spurned and one deliberately follows a course of sin, God's holiness demands that the sinner be punished. Remember, Christ Himself, is speaking in the following verse:

V 23. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I AM He, which searches the reins and the hearts; and I will give unto everyone of you, according to your works.

How sad that the church of Thyatira, so highly praised for good works in the opening passages, must be horribly judged because of having undone every good thing that had been originally performed in the name of their Saviour. Likewise, today, it is possible for the Christian to lose every reward he has earned, *so look to yourselves, that [you] lose not those things which [you] have wrought [or earned].* (2 John 8). The only good news concerning Thyatira was that a remnant remained faithful in spite of deterioration of this local church.

V 24. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak: I will put upon you none of the burden.

The Lord Jesus informed John that those who did not succumb to Jezebel's theological follies, or fall into fornication and/or idolatry, propagated by this false Babylonian religion, would not have any other burden. They have experienced enough heartache.

V 25. But that which you already have, hold fast till I come.

Here the faithful remnant was admonished to continue in the truth of God's Word until Jesus returned.

V 26. And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

V 27. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

V 28. And I will give him the morning star.

Christ has promised faithful believers three rewards upon His return to the earth:

1. Rulership over the nations during the Millennium: *For they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years* (Chapter 20:4):
2. Sharing in this glorious time of perfect righteousness, resulting from Christ's personal enforcement and order (See Psalm 2:8-9); and
3. The abiding presence of the blessed Saviour throughout time and eternity, as Christ Himself, *the bright and morning star reigns.* (Chapter 22: 14,16).

If your life is not what it once was for Christ, don't be a loser when rewards are distributed. Instead, do a U-turn! Live for Him! Heed the warning in the next verse.

29. He that has an ear, let him hear, what the Spirit says unto the churches.

SUMMARY

CHURCH AT THYATIRA

GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**Good Works, Love, Patience, Endurance.**
2	**Works increasing day by day.**
3	**Testing the teachings of the Saints**
4	**Rejecting the false teachings and the false teachers who give it.**

CHURCH AT THYATIRA

BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**Church is divided between followers of true and false teachings.**
2	**False Prophetess teaching false Doctrines.**
3	**Elders inactive - Do not stop false teaching in the assembly, by the Prophetess.**
4	**Christian Babies being led astray by false teachings of the false Prophetess.**
5	**Lack of checking by the Church Leadership and the Congregation.**

CHURCH AT THYATIRA

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TOLD BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS FOR THE SAINTS IN THIS CHURCH
1	**REPENT OF PAST SINS - Turn back to God for forgiveness.**
2	**Check all Doctrines taught in the Assembly!**
3	**Remove all false prophets from the assembly!**
4	**Teach Correct Doctrine. If it can't be found in the Word - don't teach it at all!**
5	**Protect and recover the "Babes in Christ". (Remember, go and search for and bring back the lost sheep into the sheepfold)**
6	**Test all future Words given in the Assembly.**
7	**If it does not line up with the Word of God - then reject it all!**

CHURCH AT THYATIRA

PROMISES GIVEN BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	PROMISES FOR THOSE WHO OBEY IN THIS CHURCH
1	**Reward each as you deserve - check your attitudes also.**
2	**No added trials for those who tested the Word and rejected it.**
3	**Hold fast to what you have till I come for my chosen people.**

CHURCH AT THYATIRA

CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE WHO DON'T REPENT

ITEM	CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE WHO DON'T REPENT
1	**Some souls to be lost - to cleanse the Body of Christ.**
2	**Wrongdoers given no second chance - all are destroyed!**
3	**Jesus removes the unholy by elimination, to protect the holy from contamination.**

From the tables it is very easy to see that this church type has a problem, in that the church has allowed wrong teaching to continue in the church, **for some time**, **without taking steps to remove it and teach the correct Word, from the Scriptures**.

Some of the believers have remembered Apostle Paul's warning to the Church at Ephesus and have carefully tested the teachings from the 'so-called' apostles, and have found that the teachings did not line up with the Word of God, and as a result, they have rejected the teachings and the men who teach them.

Unfortunately, the mature Christians, upon identifying the false teachers and the false prophetess, did not take the necessary steps to **REMOVE THEM FROM THE CHURCH BODY**, which is the correct action, as stated in the Word.

The result was that some of the "babies in Christ" were led astray by the false teachers, and the Words of the false prophetess. **Jesus says that this leads towards destruction!**

It appears from the account in the Book of Revelation, that the Lord must have sent many messages in prophecy to the church, identifying that there was false teaching taking place, to warn the church to take some positive action, to remove the people concerned, but alas the church elders, the church pastors, and the mature Christians in the congregation did nothing!

The promises and consequences for this church are things we should be happy about, (on the one hand), and sad about (on the other).

For the people who recognized the wrong doctrine in the church, and refused to follow it, Jesus promised that they would not receive additional trials in their earthly lives, but that they must hold fast to what they already have (their salvation and their faith) until the Lord comes back for His bride.

Jesus goes on to tell John that He has given the false prophetess plenty of time to change her ways, but that she has hardened her heart and refused to repent of her sins, so it is logical that she should be destroyed, given over to the desires of her heart, given over to Satan and eternal damnation. But what about the poor young babies that were led astray by her???

You would think that they should be now awakened to the truth of the wrong teachings and be given a chance to repent and turn back to Jesus Christ.

We see in this example, both the justice and the mercy of God at work. ***The young babies in Christ are given one last chance to repent and turn back to God.*** All who fail to listen to this warning are then to be destroyed, along with the false prophetess and her teachers.

All throughout the Bible, the Word clearly commands us to be the "HOLIEST PEOPLE ON EARTH". The judgement upon this church is that, like the bad hand, or bad eye, which was to be cut off, to save the remainder. (Ref. Matt. 18:8-9)

Jesus will "cut off the bad part of the church", to stop the pollution of the Word from spreading, to other parts of the Body of Christ.

JESUS IS PREPARED TO ALLOW SOME SOULS TO BE LOST, TO KEEP THE BODY OF CHRIST PURE & HOLY & ACCEPTABLE TO HIM. *This is the reference to names being removed from the Lamb's Book of Life.*

If we, as Christians, do not guard against the "watering down" or "polluting of the Word" in our assemblies, then the Lord will act to remove these offenders, by **ELIMINATION**.

CHAPTER THREE: THE PRESENT CONTINUES

STAGE FIVE: THE CHURCH IN SARDIS

The fifth letter, written to the local church in Sardis, is also from the Saviour Jesus Christ, for He has the seven stars in His right hand, as indicated in Revelation chapter 1, verse 6. Again, the Saviour begins by commending Sardis for her works.

V 1. And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; these things says He that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars. I know thy works, that thou has a name, that live, AND ARE DEAD!

Historically, Sardis began in 1520 AD, an undoubtedly extends into the Tribulation Period [which means it exists today]. This period of time covers the Reformation (with its dead, lukewarm churches) and is presently part of the Laodicean period as well. The reason for the deadness is that, during the Reformation, entire countries became Protestant without being born again. Protestantism was made the "state religion", and was freely embraced by millions of people who did not know what it meant to become new creations in Christ Jesus (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). Thus, Sardis became the mother of orthodoxy. Her theme song was not "Standing on the Promises", but "Sleeping on the Premises" ~ her members were dead!

God help us to have life! Hundreds of churches follow Sardis's lead today. This is the reason millions are leaving liberal churches for good, old fashioned, gospel-preaching lighthouses. Immediately God called for a five-fold revival package.

V 2. Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die. For I have not found thy works perfect before God.

V 3. Remember therefore, how you received and heard, and hold fast, and REPENT. If therefore, you shall not watch, I will come as a thief, and you shall not know what hour I will come upon thee.

The Church in Sardis needs to have spiritual CPR, because it is dying, or in some cases, is already dead. Sardis was admonished to:

1. ***Be watchful or alert: knowing the time, that now it is high time to wake up out of your sleep (Romans 13:11);***
2. ***Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die. Her people were to do everything possible to salvage the little good that still remained in their bastion of dead orthodoxy;***
3. ***Remember therefore how you received and heard. The Sardis Christians were COMMANDED to recall the former days ~ the early days of their salvation, when they were filled with purity and zeal;***
4. ***Hold fast! They were to retain the simple truth of the gospel and discard the excess baggage of ecclesiastical pomp and ceremony; and***
5. ***REPENT! They were to change their minds (and their mind sets). Christ's call was not for "personal" repentance, BUT FOR THE ENTIRE CHURCH; YES, the whole (entire) movement has to change! The Reformation churches needed to turn back to Christ, seeking His will and His Spirit's teaching, rather than "man-made" ideas about theological truth.***

One of the areas of truth the Reformation churches failed to proclaim was to return to Christ. Therefore, the Lord said that this event would catch them unawares: *You shall not know what hour I will come upon thee.* Mo wonder many of the present-day offspring of the Reformation have ministers who say, "No one can understand the Book of Revelation. It is a deep, mysterious, symbolical, figurative book. Well, I say to them ~~ "Baloney"! The scriptures tell us *that the Holy Spirit will lead us into all TRUTH.* Preachers, Layman, YOU are the ones that Christ had in mind. *Awake you that sleeps … and Christ shall* [raise you from the dead] (spiritually speaking). IN-THE-MIDST-OF this deadness, Sardis had a few who could still wiggle, spiritually.

V 4. <u>You have a few names</u> even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

Though the Reformation churches, like the "mother" out of whom they came, <u>did not practice holiness in the Lord</u> there were individuals <u>who did not defile their garments in compromise with the world, the flesh, and the devil.</u> They came ***out from among them, and [touched] not the unclean thing.*** (2 Corinthians 6:17).

As a result, they were promised the rewards of being clothed in white garments, as stated in the later part of verse 4 and in verse 5;

V 5. He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; AND I WILL NOT BLOT OUT HIS NAME OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

The white raiment is found upon the Bride of Christ, at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife (HIS CHOSEN CHURCH) has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF SAINTS.* (Revelation 19:7-8).

In addition, those who possess "a genuine salvation experience" will have the names remaining in the Lamb's Book of Life eternally. What Security! If you "endure until the end" Christ says, *I will not blot out his name …. Before The Father ~ and before his angels.*

V 6. He that has an ear, let him hear, what the Spirit says unto the churches.

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR SALVATION EXPERIENCE IS "REAL" & CONTINUE IN HOLINESS BEFORE THE LORD.

SUMMARY

CHURCH AT SARDIS
GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS
1	Still a few souls who have not soiled their clothes with sin - who are still worthy of keeping their names in the Lamb's Book of Life.
2	These people are the only people who are acceptable to Christ in this church, to keep their salvation until eternity.

CHURCH AT SARDIS
BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS
1	*JESUS WILL TREAT THIS CHURCH LIKE UNBELIEVERS !!!*
2	He will come upon them like a thief in the night and steal away their salvation - their promised eternal life.
3	"Jesus" no longer thinks of this as a Christian Church anymore!

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CHURCH AT SARDIS
CORRECTIVE ADVICE GIVEN BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	CORRECTION TO BECOME RESTORED TO CHRIST
1	Arouse yourself from Spiritual sleep.
2	Keep Spiritually Awake.
3	Strengthen and liven up your faith.
4	Revise the lessons you have heard.
5	Keep them in your mind & in your heart.
6	Obey them at all times.
7	Do works worthy of repentance.
8	Start a record of works worthy of mention in Heaven.

CHURCH AT SARDIS
PROMISES TO THE RIGHTEOUS ONES

ITEM	PROMISES BY JESUS CHRIST
1	People who are judged worthy by Jesus Christ shall wear white robes and their names shall remain in the Lamb's Book of Life.
2	Their names shall be proclaimed openly in Heaven.

CHURCH AT SARDIS
CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE WHO DON'T REPENT
OF THEIR SINS

ITEM	CONSEQUENCES PROMISED BY JESUS CHRIST
1	Jesus Christ shall come upon them like a thief in the night.
2	He shall remove their names from the Lamb's Book of Life.
3	They shall lose their salvation and go into eternal damnation.

In studying this church, you may have been surprised to see that Jesus threatens to remove a person's name from the Lamb's Book of Life, because the person's clothes had become soiled, with his disobedience and his sinful nature.

Many Christians believe that **"ONCE SAVED IS ALWAYS SAVED". Well unfortunately that is <u>not what the Scripture says</u>.** In Rev. 3:4-5 Jesus makes the statement that there are still a few who have not soiled their clothes.... **<u>and I will NOT erase their names from the Book of Life.</u>**

This means that to qualify in keeping your name in the Book of Life, you must not soil your clothes, you must remain in accordance with the Word of God at all times, regularly examining your position before God and repent of any disobedience or mis-doing's, so as to remain righteous before the Lord (at all times).

Another way of looking at this statement, is as recorded in John 15:16. In this Scripture, Jesus says that you did not choose Him, He in fact chose you and ordained you, that you should go out and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain (PERFECT). If your fruit does not remain, or goes bad, then you are no longer worthy to keep your name in the lamb's book of life.

In using this definition of worthiness, it is necessary to challenge every pastor, in every church, across every land. In Matt. 18:12, Jesus makes mention of the shepherd with 100 sheep in the flock, under his love, guidance and responsibility. These are the "fruit" that he is to "take care of", until Jesus returns for His bride.

We know today that from time to time, some of the "sheep" wander back into the world, following after their "previous shepherd", which is Satan.

In discussing this problem with pastors in many different countries, I have been given all sorts of EXCUSES, (but called statistics), that it is normal for approximately 10-20% of all believers to fall away, during the first year of their salvation. They have said, in effect, that they are prepared to allow 20% of their fruit to drop to the ground, to rot and die. I would suggest that they ask themselves why Jesus Christ said that they are to leave the 99 sheep and go out and find **AND BRING BACK THE SHEEP THAT WAS LOST**. Why did Jesus Christ say that ?? If Jesus Christ said that they should do it, then I would humbly suggest that some pastors better change their attitudes to their "retention factors", and instead of accepting an 80% retention factor, they better get back into the Word and go for the 100% that is required of them, so that their garments shall not be considered soiled and their names shall not be removed from the Lamb's Book of Life, like is written for the Church of SARDIS.

SIXTH STAGE: THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

The sixth letter is written to the Church of Philadelphia, and covers the historical period from 1750 ANDuntil the "Rapture" [when Jesus appears in the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17)] to "the calling away" of His Church, His "betrothed" to Himself, for the Marriage Ceremony in Heaven. This means that, like the church in Sardis, this Church is in operation in the world right now.

V 7. And to the angel [or messenger] of the church of Philadelphia write these things says he that is holy, he that is true, he that has the key of David, he that opens, and no man shuts; and shuts and no man opens;

Once again, the message is from the Lord Jesus Christ. However, insteandof gleaning a picture from chapter 1, as we have seen in the past, we are now given a new and beautiful four-fold description of the Lord;

1. ***He that is holy; one finds that description of Christ in Hebrews 7:26;***
2. ***He that is true; Jesus said; I am the way, the truth and the Life (John 14:6);***
3. ***He that has the key of David; Jesus again said: I am the root of the offspring of David (Rev. 22:16);***
4. ***He that opens, no name shuts, and shuts and no man opens. Christ's commendation is presented to the local church of Philadelphia in verses 8-10;***

V 8. I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no can shut it: for you have a little strength, and have kept my word, and have not denied my name.

V 9. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

V 10. Because you have kept the word of my patience. I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

We immediately realise that the Church of Philadelphia is loaded with good works. The open door speaks of missions, and the church covering this era of time undoubtedly has done, and is doing, more that any other group ever attempted to do in the annals of history. Thank God for such vision! *Where there is no vision, the people perish.* (Proverbs 29:18).

Although the group does so much, they are still a MINORITY, *for [they had] a little strength.* One of their great strengths was they the kept His name. Since the church of Philadelphia extends into our 21st century, and even to the point of the Rapture, "the calling away" of His church, the command for each of us today is that we never deny His name, *for if we deny him, He will also deny us.* (2 Timothy 2:12). Oh, the tremendous loss some will experience at *The Judgement Seat of Christ* (2 Corinthians 5:10). Jesus Christ also promised these faithful brethren that the members of the synagogue of Satan (false professors of religion, as described in Rev. 2:9), will be forced to bow and worship the Lord God Almighty, wilfully, or unwilfully, at a future time (Rev. 3:9). This could be at the Judgement Day, for Paul informed the children of God that they would share with Christ in Judgement. Hear Him when He says; *Do you know that the saints will judge the world?* (1 Corinthians 6:2).

Christ also spoke of that time when He stated: *As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* (Romans 14:11).

Finally, because of their love for Christ, the Philadelphia-era disciples are promised exemption from the day of the Lord's wrath, or the Great Tribulation Hour: *I… will keep thee from the hour of temptation* (Rev. 3:10). In the Greek the word for *from* is *"ek."* Meaning "out of".

God promises to keep the Philadelphia disciples "out of" ~ not "through" (preservation), but "out of" (evacuation) the Tribulation.

Thus, the Church will be gone when the terrible hour of Tribulation Judgement comes upon the world, to try the remaining earth-dwellers. PRAISE GOD! "This is not my hone, I'm only passing through," [Because I got a passport to Heaven, it's Jesus Christ my Lord][5]. We disciples are not earth dwellers, for our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). In the light of the coming of Christ, and admonition it gives in the next verse.

V 11. Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which you have, that no man takes thy crown.

Here the Christian Disciples are warned to "remain faithful"; lest all rewards (but not your salvation) be lost ~ even the loss of one's crown. The promise of verse 12, is to those who are "faithful".

V 12. Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.

Three blessings are mentioned for the "Faithful Disciples";

1. ***They become pillars in the temple of God;***
2. ***The have the name of God written upon them, thus identifying them, and allowing them access into the city of God ~ the New Jerusalem described in Rev. chapters 21 & 22), and;***

[5] A lyric out of one of my songs, by the same name.

3. They have a new name written upon them. The name of God allows them to be His servants, where they shall see His face (See chapter 22:3-4). Because the future blessings are so wonderful, the admonition continues:

V 13. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

SUMMARY

CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA
GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**Works are acceptable**
2	**Power used wisely.**
3	**Test all teachings**
4	**The church has not renounced the name of Jesus Christ.**
5	**Shown "Agape Love" in all situations, even during trial and tribulations.**
6	**The church is acceptable to God WITHOUT ANY CHANGES!**

CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA
PROMISES GIVEN BY JESUS CHRIST FOR THIS CHURCH

ITEM	PROMISES GIVEN FOR THIS CHURCH BY JESUS CHRIST
1	**Jesus places an open door in front of this church, which cannot be closed by Satan or any of his agents.**
2	**Saints kept from the trials which will come at the "end-time".**
3	**Hold fast to their treasures, the crown of eternal life.**
4	**Made to be a pillar in the Heavenly City with a new name.**

We have some good news, when studying the Church of Philadelphia, for it is clear that in the eyes of God, **this church type is acceptable to Him WITHOUT ANY CHANGES**: shout HALLELUJAH!!!.

In the eyes of God - not man, the work of this church is deemed to be acceptable. Even though the church had little power, it has used it wisely to glorify the Lord. The church was very conscious that false teachings could creep into the Body of Christ and so they tested EVERY TEACHING AND EVERY DOCTRINE, to ensure that it was in accordance with the Scriptures.

Neither the church as a whole, nor the individual believers, renounced or denied the Lord's name at any time. The Lord emphasizes that this church ENDURED PATIENTLY their trials and hardships, according to the lessons taught them by Jesus and the Apostles.

This means they endured their trials and tribulations with love for one another, both for the believers and for the unbelievers alike. They were not complainers, gossipers, liars, or people who caused division in the churches, etc., but at all times, by their words and their actions, they showed and manifested the agape love, which is the true sign of a mature Christian.

The promises given by the Lord for this church are worthy of note also, as they must make us examine our own thinking and attitudes.

First of all, Jesus promises that in front of this church God has placed a door and this door is open forever. No-one on earth can shut the door before this church – not even Satan!

Secondly, all of the false teachers, which have been identified in the other churches so far, will be required to bow down at the feet of the saints of the church of Philadelphia and acknowledge that Jesus has loved these saints.

Thirdly, the saints of this church are told they will not suffer the hour of testing, which is to come upon the world, indicating that the saints of the church of Philadelphia shall be guaranteed a place in the rapture when Jesus comes back for His children.

As encouragement, Jesus tells the saints of this church to HOLD FAST TO THE TREASURE THAT THEY HAVE, so no-one can rob them of their crown (which by right, already belongs to them).

For those people who do hold fast, they shall have written on them, the name of God, (for their protection), become the pillars in the new city and receive the new name of Jesus Christ.

Many Christians do not realize that after Jesus Christ comes back after the rapture, He will rule for 1,000 years and will be given a new name, as will all His worthy subjects. Even though this church did not have any faults, at the time the Scriptures were written, there is still a warning given to all the believers in this congregation.

The individual believers in this church, could lose their crowns in Heaven, if they become complacent and ceased to hold fast to the treasures they have acquired already in Heaven.

This is a warning that ALL BELIEVERS SHOULD NOT TAKE LIGHTLY. If you do not keep your fruit remaining, that is, the fruit of your repentance, your fruit of salvation, your fruits of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which is given severally, as the Lord wills, (not man) then you will not be deemed acceptable, in the eyes of God, on the day of judgement and shall have to go through the **Baptism of Fire**, fire of purification, to have all the chaff burned off your spiritual body, so the remainder can be turned into the jewels by purging through the fire.

Christians therefore have to review their spiritual positions on a regular basis, to ensure that in accordance with Hebrews 6:1-3, we are continually maturing as Christians, not staying at the same level of spiritual growth, or understanding.

SEVENTH STAGE: THE CHURCH OF LAODICEA

The 7th and final letter, is to the local church at Laodicea, which covers the historical period 1900 AD to the Tribulation Hour (which means it is operating on the earth today!)

The message, as in all previous letters, is from the Lord Jesus Christ.

V 14. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, these things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

The three-fold description of the Saviour includes:

1. **The Amen. In Hebrew this word means ("True, or, it is true"). The complete meaning is "truth in its finality", which pictures Christ as the final truth;**
2. **The faithful and true witness; This statement links Christ to Rev. 1:5, where He is called true, and**
3. **The beginning of the creation of God. Since the Lord is the firstborn of all creation (Colossians 1:15), we again recognise Him as the speaker.**

V 15. I know thy works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would that you be cold or hot;

The Laodiceans church also has works, but her service is rendered (performed) in a lukewarm fashion. What a picture of this present age! Some of our churches are so cold that signs on the doors could advertise these religious refrigerators as, "First Church of the Deep Freeze, pastored by Dr. Jack Frost." The situation is so drastic that, whereas parishioners used to quote the verse, "Many are called, but few are chosen," they now think the "New **Reversed** Version" states, "Many are cold and a few are frozen!" God only knows how serious the present situation literally is.

V 16. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue you out of my mouth. [Once saved always saved? I DON'T THINK SO!]

The condition of the Laodicean church makes God violently ill that He wants to spue this group out of His mouth. The Greek word is "*emeo,"* from which we get the word *emetic. Am emetic is given to one who has swallowed poison, in order to make him regurgitate.* Think of that!

A lukewarm church is an emetic to Christ ~ It makes him want to throw up! But what is the reason for this lukewarmness, coldness, and carnality?

17. Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knows not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

The Laodicean era is a highly prosperous one. As a result, her people have erected elaborate church structures, worth millions of dollars. (Stop a moment and consider the money presently being invested in buildings which are only used for one to three hours weekly.) Laodicean churches often attack the "electronic church" ministries. The command of Jesus is, *GO ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature* (Mark 16:15). However, the "electronic church" ministers are simply **obeying the Saviour.** God help each of us to see that although buildings are necessary for worship and service, there should be humble edifices rather than multi-million-dollar architectural monstrosities, which glorify men ~ not God!

God tells the Laodiceans that they are really wretched and miserable, poor (spiritually, though worldly rich), blind, and naked. This is true because riches usually makes one wretched and miserable. One spends forty years accumulating his wealth, and his final thirty years keeping others from getting it. The Laodiceans are so spiritually blind that they cannot see the need of millions who are dying, without the Saviour, and going into eternal loss. Because of this fact, they are spiritually naked, both now and for eternity, for they are not clothed with Christ's robe of righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). His plea to them is ~

V 18. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness does not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

Christ instructs the Laodiceans to:

1. **Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich. This probably refers to Peter 1:7, where the trial of [our] faith [is] … more than of gold;**
2. **Buy white raiment ~ undoubtedly, the reference is to the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness mentioned in Isaiah 61:10; and**
3. **Anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that you may see. This speaks of spiritual illumination which only the saved share. The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14). Because of these conditions prevalent in the Laodicean church, the Lord states;**

V 19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; Be zealous therefore, and REPENT!

This message reminds us of Hebrews 12:6, which states; *whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son who he receives.* Spiritual spankings are administered in order that we might be zealous and REPENT, or "change our minds." He continues…

V 20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

This verse is actually a picture of Jesus Christ standing outside the door of these latter-day (last-day) churches, rather than the hearts of individuals, as we often hear preached.

Presently, entire churches, and entire denominations are barring the Saviour's entrance. UNBELIEVABLE ~ BUT TRUE! However, those churches who listen to His appeal, open the door, and follow Jesus, will not be sorry.

V 21. To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat with my Father in His Throne.

Notice you will not sit ON the throne, but will be IN the throne, and integral part of its construction.

V 22. He that has a ear, let him hear, what the Spirit says unto the churches.

SUMMARY

CHURCH AT LAODICEA

GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST IN THIS CHURCH
1	***NO GOOD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST IN THIS CHURCH !!!***

CHURCH AT LAODICEA
BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	BAD POINTS FOUND BY JESUS CHRIST IN THIS CHURCH
1	**Not acceptable to the Lord, because it is a spiritual church which is not "on-fire" for the Lord.**
2	**They are not hot or cold - just lukewarm. This is a spiritual state that the Lord will not accept.**
3	**The church covets the wealth of the world, instead of the wealth of spiritual things.**
4	**This church is under the false illusion that it is acceptable - but unfortunately it is not.**

CHURCH AT LAODICEA

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS FROM JESUS CHRIST

FOR THE LAODICEANS

ITEM	ALTERNATIVES FOR THE LAODICEAN CHURCH
1	**Unless they repent, they shall be rejected by Jesus as unworthy.**
2	**If they repent, they shall sit beside Jesus in Heaven.**
3	**These are the only two choices given to this church.**
4	**It is a "take it or leave it" option. Jesus has judged them already - they just have to decide on which place they wish to be after judgement time takes place in Heaven.**

CHURCH AT LAODICEA
PROMISES FROM JESUS CHRIST FOR THE LAODICEANS

ITEM	PROMISES FOR THE LAODICEAN CHURCH
1	**Dramatically change your spiritual ways & wake up for Christ.**
2	**Provide treasures tried by temptations - treasures worthy in Heaven.**
3	**Walk in the way of righteousness to receive white robes.**
4	**Jesus chastens you and corrects you because He loves you and does not want any to perish - so repent before it is too late.**

In the book of Colossians, 4:16, Apostle Paul instructs the people in the Church at Colossae to read the Epistle that he has sent to them and then to forward it on to the church in Laodicea, and to take the Epistle that he has written to them and bring it back and read it in the Church of Colossae. So, there is an extra Epistle that was written by Apostle Paul, which is not in our Bible today, but was around at the end of the first Century Church.[6]

The church of Laodicea, is like many churches which exist today, in the developed world. It is a church which has a flashy, impressive modern building, with air-conditioning, modern sophisticated electronic sound and music systems, comfortable upholstered seats, lush carpets on the floor, overhead projectors, video screens and all the other things which go with a very affluent society.

The church pastor is given a large house, compliments of the church, plus an expensive car and a high salary. He is a member of some of the best society clubs around town - and in some cases, he has some businesses on the side, (just as insurance, or to help put the children through college.)

The church appears to be very rich (and in fact in a worldly sense, it is) <u>but it is spiritually dying</u>. It resembles a selective society club, where membership is limited to the very select few, who earn high salaries, or who are relatives of someone who does.

The church gives a token offering to the poor and a token offering to the mission work of the church, but <u>the attitude is one of obligation - not because of the genuine love of God.</u>

- No-one can remember when the pastor last prayed for anyone to be healed (and a healing actually took place).
- No-one can remember when the last person made a genuine commitment to serve the Lord with **ALL of his life and his money and his talents**.

Even if they could, they would remark that "Johnny" always took his religion too seriously anyway. This is a church in definite spiritual decline. It is a church that Jesus no longer considers to be CHRISTIAN by name, as it does not glorify Christ in any of its activities.

Jesus Christ is very harsh in His judgement on this church, but for very good reason. Jesus clearly tells John that He will spit this church out of His mouth if it remains in its present state and with its present attitudes.

But we know that God is merciful, God is just and God is never changing, He is always compassionate in His ways. Jesus Christ gives this church the opportunity to repent, to change their ways and again come back to Him, like the prodigal son.

In Rev. 3:20, we have the famous Scripture, where Jesus says He is waiting just outside the door to our hearts, gently knocking and waiting for us to open the door, so He can have fresh and continual communion with us. This clearly shows the glory of God.

Despite the fact that Jesus wishes to spit this church out of His mouth, He will not do so without giving every individual believer inside the church an opportunity to once again be restored to the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

What a great and mighty God we have HALLELUIAH !!!

So, in the church of Laodicea, we have a clear warning to all financially secure churches, who consider the appearances of their churches and the way they dress up their choir personnel, more important than the basic teachings of Acts 1:8, to spread the good news to all nations of the earth.

Any church which does not have an outreach programme in their own city, their own country, and who do not send mission funds to assist in the spreading of the gospel, in other countries, either by financial support to their own missionaries, or to other

[6] For more information about the Epistle to the Church at Laodicea please read the appendix.

foreign missionaries, are (in my view) guilty, in God's eyes, of falling into the category of the LAODICEAN church.

Any church which allows denominationalism to take precedence over the Word of God (all the Word of God ~ all of the Bible) is also guilty of belonging to this category.

Let us now try to draw some conclusions:

We have examined seven churches and we arrived at the startlingly score of:

- 2 churches for God
- 5 churches for Satan

This is not what many Christians would have expected when they commenced this chapter, but the Word tells the truth of the situation, as Jesus, not man, judged those churches at that time.

In the seven churches we have studied, the message to the angel of each of the seven churches always finishes with the words:

"He who can hear, let him listen to and heed what the Spirit (Holy Spirit) says to the assemblies (the churches).

This is the New Testament equivalent, to the Old Testament command, which was given by God to each of the prophets, when giving them a message to deliver to the people of Israel. "Thus, saith the Lord God of Israel." .....

This message for the seven church types, is a direct message to us from the Lord, and we must obey it, in the same way that we obey Acts 2:38-39, when we repent of our sins, are baptized in water and receive the Holy Spirit power into our lives.

For those churches which at present do not believe that the Holy Spirit is for this day and age, I feel sorry, because they will therefore not heed the warnings of the Book of Revelation, and as such, their saints may not fall into a category which is recognized (in God's eyes) as acceptable to Him, in the last days.

The above seven church types were recognized as being in existence at the time, some 60 years after the ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven.

But this warning is given to us, so that we, as individual churches today, would not fall into some of the pitfalls and traps those early churches did.

Therefore, we as individual churches, must examine ourselves in the light of the points identified for all the previous churches and identify (TRUTHFULLY) where we, as individual churches stand.

THE SPIRITUAL CHECKLIST.

The following table is recommended as a checklist, to identify where your individual church stands, in relation to the points identified as being, for or against, each of the individual seven church types studied.

If you identify any points which God has previously identified as being not acceptable, then the obvious solution is also to identify **GOD'S REMEDY FOR ITS CORRECTION**, so that the church can once again be found acceptable in God's sight.

After completing the checklist table for the church, (collectively) then each individual Christian should then examine the **SAME LIST FOR HIS OWN SPIRITUAL SITUATION** and follow **THE SAME SET OF CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**.

In concluding this study, I trust that every person has been challenged to have a careful look at their particular church, their teachings and organization and in addition reflect on their own personal positions and relationships firstly to the Lord and then to other members of the Body of Christ.

***

SPIRITUAL CHECK LIST for INDIVIDUAL CHURCHES And INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANS

In the following table you will be asked a series of questions about [YOUR CHURCH] and then about you; as a MEMBER OF THAT CHURCH.

For each question, I want you to put a number from 0 to 3 in each square. If you think this is a good thing that your church is doing then these number will be positive (+ sign).

But if you think this is WRONG, and that the word in the scriptures confirms this was wrong in the scriptures, then, put a negative (- sign).

Please remember, Jesus knows the answers to all-of these questions, because He dictated the Book of Revelation to Apostle John, for our edification, and as a warning to get our lives right with Him, before the "Rapture" (the taking away of the Bride of Christ – HIS TRUE CHURCH).

IF YOU HAVE BEEN "LEFT BEHIND", THERE WILL BE ANOTHER TABLE LIKE THIS BEFORE JESUS COMES WITH THE WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT. YOU WILL STILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE SAVED AS "TRIBULATION SAINTS", BY NOT TAKING THE MARK OF THE BEAST ON YOUR HAND OR YOUR FOREHEAD, BUT SUFFERING THE 21 JUDGEMENTS.

ITEM	SIGN + or -	YOUR CHURCH	YOU ~ AS A CHRISTIAN.
Is Jesus the centre of all the attention in your church?			
Is your church involved with activities which help people of different ethnic backgrounds all over the world?			
Does your church patiently endure under unrighteous attacks, both from within and/or outside the church body?			
Does your church tolerate wicked men inside or outside the church body?			
Does your church test the teachings and prophecies, in accordance with the Word and expel the false teachers and prophets when you find their teaching does not line up with the Word of God?			
Does your church proclaim Christ and Christian principles in all situations?			
Does your church hate corruption and do they do anything about it?			
Has your church left, lost, abandoned their first love, which is Jesus Christ?			
Does your church react correctly when placed under physical and/or political pressure from inside/outside the church body?			
Is your church prepared to proclaim Jesus Christ in the face of imprisonment or even death?			
Does your church have a good record of works, produced by and through trials and strife and achieved them through the use of faith in Jesus Christ?			
Can you see: Love, faith, service, patient endurance all in operation in your church assembly?			
Does the works, through faith, increase day by day, in your church body?			
Are false teachers allowed to continue to operate in your church, in your presence, without corrective action?			
Does your church have groups, or an individual who likes to gossip about other people?			
Is the Holy Spirit Gift of Discernment operating in your church?			
Are all the Holy Spirit gifts as per 1. COR. Chapter 12 operating in your church on a regular basis?			
Are the 9 fruit flavours of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as per GAL. 5:22 operating in your church regularly?			
Does your church encourage and practise the operation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in accordance with 1. COR. Chapter 14?			
Does you church have elders & deacons appointed as per the book of Titus?			
Do the elders' control and govern the church, or is it controlled by the pastor, as a dictator?			
If your church has "daughter" churches, do they have elders and deacons, and are they in complete control of their own daughter church, or must they get approval from the "mother" church for everything they want to do?			
Is there a bottle of oil in your church, so that an elder can anoint the sick and pray for their complete healing, as per James 5:14?			
Does your church have altar calls for salvation? How often?			
When was the last time that someone accepted Jesus Christ in your church?			
Does your church call for people to receive the Holy Spirit into their lives?			
How often does this happen?			

ITEM	SIGN + or -	YOUR CHURCH	YOU ~ AS A CHRISTIAN.
Does your church encourage the believers to be baptized by total immersion in water? How often do these baptismal services take place?			
Does you church emphasize that your church should be Holy?			
Is your church Holy?			
Does your church take positive steps to make sure that it remains Holy all the time?			
Does your church preach that your fruit must remain, as per the words in John 15:16?			
What action does your church take if one believer goes out of the church? Do you follow the instructions of Jesus, as stated in MATT. 18:12-14?			
If the answer to the above is NO !!, do you put it down to statistics of this day and age? just a sign of the times !!!			
What percentage of people who accepted salvation, in your church, during the last 2-year period are still practising Christians today? (Either in your church or elsewhere)?			
As an individual church, has there been someone accept the salvation of Jesus Christ in your church during the last month?			
How often does this happen?			
As a believer, have you ever witnessed or led a person to accept the Lord as their personal Saviour?			
Are they (your fruit) still strong practising Christians today?			
Is your church spiritually alive and awake?			
Does your church continually strengthen and invigorate your faith into action?			
Does your church give balanced lessons and teachings in all areas of the Scriptures, or does it concentrate on one area only - like evangelism, but not give proper nurture food for all new believers?			
Is your church a growing one, or is it one that just has a constant stream of changing faces, but with approximately the same number of people in the congregation each week?			
Does your church (and church elders) practise what they preach; or are they hearers of the Word only?			
Has your church had a series of studies on the 7 churches in Revelations, before you read this Module?			
Did they change anything in the church?			
How often does this happen?			
Does your church consider the church buildings more important than spending money on the mission program, and spreading of god's word throughout the earth?			
Does your church, chasten, discipline, or correct its members, when they go astray from the word of God?			
How do they do this? As per what series of scriptures?			
Does your church allow a marriage between a believer & a non-believer to take place on its premises?			
Does your church allow a marriage between same sex couples to take place on its premises?			
Does your church have a fund for widows, to help those who are in distress, or in need in your congregation?			

ITEM	SIGN + or -	YOUR CHURCH	YOU ~ AS A CHRISTIAN.
How does your church select their pastor or shepherd?			
Do you place more emphasis on the person's educational skill and qualifications, or on the "fruit" of his ministry?			
Does your church participate with other churches in your town, to lift up the name of Jesus Christ higher than any other name, or do you think they are in competition with you and that they may steal your sheep?			
Doesn't all of the sheep belong to Jesus Christ, not the individual churches?			
Does your church teach that "we are all equal at the foot of the cross," because "while we were yet sinners, Jesus Christ died for ALL-OF US?"			
TOTALS: **FOR YOUR CHURCH & FOR YOU AS A MEMBER OF YOUR CHURCH.**			

As you are by now aware, it is only two of the churches which are acceptable "in God's eyes" to be able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, in their present states.

In undertaking the Spiritual Checklist shown above, you can do it as carefully (or as carelessly) as you choose. The point you must realize is that you do not have to convince me how good your individual church is, you have to convince yourself.

Finally, God Almighty already knows the score, for both your church, and for you, as an individual Christian, so don't try to fool Him, it won't work.

If you find that you did not get a perfect score, then you need to do something about it, as only those with "perfect scores" in God's eyes will be able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

CONCLUSIONS FOR THE SEVEN STAGES OF CHURCH HISTORY

We have carefully examined the seven church stages, and seen that we are now operating in THREE church ages, which are operating simultaneously. And whether we like it or not, **OUR CHURCH [the 8th CHURCH]** has to fit into one of these three church types that we have identified.

We are now at the "beginning of the end of the Age of the Gentiles", the "Rapture", the "calling away" of "Christ's chosen Church" [**The 9th CHURCH]**, to be His bride, has not yet occurred, but it not far off. As we move forward into the remaining chapter, we are actually now reading history, written in advance, we are going "back to the future".

CHAPTER FOUR: THE FUTURE IS COMING!

From now on, we are studying the Prophetical future to prepare us for what is to come. Remember chapter 1:19; *Write these things which you have seen [past], and the things which are [present], and the things which shall be hereafter [future].*

That text presented three tenses and informed us that the Book of Revelation is written in Chronological order: the *Past* ~ Chapter 1; the *Present* ~ Chapters 2 & 3 (the history of the seven church ages up until the present time); and the *Future* ~ chapters 4 through 22. So, let's have a look at what is coming our way, in the not-so-distant future.

V 1. After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as if it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, come up hither, and I will show you, things which must be hereafter.

John starts this chapter with the words "After this". After what? After the completion, of the history of the seven churches. After this, John sees a door opened in heaven and hears a trumpet-like voice loudly and victoriously crying out, "Come up hither". This is the "Rapture" [the "calling away"] of the Church of Jesus Christ.

When this happens, multitudes from all kindreds, peoples, tongues, and denominations, will meet the Saviour face-to-face in the clouds, as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

What IS the Rapture? It is the literal, visible bodily coming of Jesus Christ in the clouds, to "call out of THIS world" literally and bodily, every born-again disciple ~ first the dead (from their graves), and then the living.

First, we see that Jesus is coming bodily. Remember the cultists of bygone days, who said that the Lord was about to return? Clothed in white sheets, they sat on the mountain sides in anxious anticipation ~ but Christ did not come. Date Setting for Christ's return is wrong. *But of the day and hour knows no man, not the angels in heaven, but my Father only.* (Mathew 24:36) This gets expounded in later chapters.

Because of their embarrassment, these cultists immediately stated: "Oh, we were right; Christ did come, but it was an invisible manifestation. He came as a Spirit". NOT so! When Jesus Christ returns, both in the Rapture (chapter 4) and at His Revelation (Chapter 19), He will come literally, visibly, and bodily. Proof? Acts 1:9-11 says: and *when [Jesus] had spoken these words, while they beheld him, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked up steadfastly towards heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel: Which also said; You men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? The same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come [back] in like manner, as you have seen him go into heaven.* The Lord will return exactly as He left.

How did he leave? Let us seek what the Bible says; In Luke 24:39, Christ appeared to His disciples and said, *Behold, may hands and my feet; that it is I, myself: handle me, and see: for a spirit has no flesh and bones, as you see me have.* Then in verses 41 & 42, He went on to say; *Have you any meat [Food]? And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat it before them.* The Lord Jesus Christ possessed a new resurrected body ~ a body that could be seen, a body that could be touched, and a body that could partake of food ~~ a literal Body!

Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: And that He was buried, and that he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures: And that he was seen by Cephas, then the 12, after that, he was seen of above [or over] 500 brethren at once, after that, he was seen of James, and last of all He was seen by me also (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).

NO doubt about it, when He returns and shouts *"Come up hither,"* we will definitely ALL SEE HIM!

At this glorious moment, we too, (those who are selected by Jesus) shall receive new bodies. The Bible teaches in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: *For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead-in Christ shall rise first; Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so, shall we ever be with the Lord.*

Notice that "the dead-in Christ" shall rise first, because their natural bodies (from the grave) have to be re-connected with their spirits, which are with Christ. Then whose who are alive (that Christ selects to be included as part of the bride,) and then we are all caught up into the heavenlies to meet Christ, and this happens very fast ~ in a twinkling of an eye. *Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [be dead], we shall all be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [the living] shall be changed. For this corruptible [the dead-in Christ] … must put on immortality.* (1 Corinthians 15:51-54). How fast is the twinkling of an eye? It is about 11, one-hundredths of a second.

So, in a split second, we shall be changed to be like Jesus. King David said; *I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.* (Psalm 17:5). John adds that when we see Jesus, *we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is.* (1 John 3:2). Then Paul, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, states: [He] *shall change our vile body ~ that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body* (Philippians 3:21). This then, describes the "calling out", or as others would say, "the Rapture".

Some Christians say that they do not believe in the term "Rapture". They argue that they cannot find the word "rapture" in the Bible. It is interesting to note that the word "Bible" cannot be found in the Bible either ~ but I am holding one!

Read carefully: The English word "rapture" comes from Latin word "*rapio, rapere, or raptus" ~ which means "snatching away". We have just seen in more than one place in scripture, that all Christians living or dead are going to be "snatched away", in the twinkling of an eye, so, if you believe scripture, then you also believe in the Rapture.*

The Bible also clearly teaches that there is a difference between the Rapture and the Revelation (Revealing) of Christ. We need to fully understand this truth, because it is the basis of fully understanding the Book of Revelation, prophetical truth, and the placement of signs.

There are two aspects, or stages in the process of the second coming of Jesus Christ. The first stage is the Rapture, which is described in chapter 4, and the second stage, the Revelation (revealing) is described in chapter 19. The intervening chapters, (5-18) basically cover the 7-years period of the Tribulation.

So, in summary; The Rapture (in the clouds) happens in chapter 4, followed by 7 years of tribulation (covered in chapters 5-18) and then the Revealing of Christ (back on the existing earth, with His bride) happens in chapter 19.

Therefore, the ***Come up hither*** of Rev. 4:1 is synonymous with the call of 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: ***For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead-in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain (loyal to Christ) shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall ever be with the Lord.***

Immediately AFTER this event, the inhabitants who remain on the earth experience seven years of incomparable judgement. This judgement ENDS with the Battle of Armageddon, at which time the door of heaven is opened again (see Rev. 19:11-16) in order that "The Bride" may exist heaven with Christ for the return trip to earth.

The return of Christ with His saints physically to this existing earth is called the Revelation, and this word comes from the word *revealing.* At this time, the glorified Lord will reveal himself to all humanity.

The question often arises, "Will the church of Jesus Christ be on the earth during the Tribulation hour?" The answer is an emphatic "NO!" The Church is mentioned 16 times in the first 3 chapters of the Book of Revelation, but is not found in chapters 6 through 18 ~ the Tribulation Period. Why?

First of all, the Tribulation is Israel's time of suffering. *Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it* (Jeremiah 30:7). *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of thy people* [Israel]: *and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people [Israelites] shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the Book.* (Daniel 12:1)

Secondly, *the first 69 weeks of Daniel's prophecy involved Israel. Why wouldn't the 70th week?* The Bible is clear and plain. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people [Israelites] and upon thy holy city [Jerusalem]* (Daniel 9:24). That is why the signs in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 17 & 21 have to do with Israel and the Middle East.

Thirdly, during the Tribulation hour, the people involved are instructed to *pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day* (Matthew 24:20). Israel is eternally identified with the Sabbath Day (Ezekiel 20:12,20).

Fourthly, When Christ returns to Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4) all the tribes of the earth mourn (Matthew 24:30). The mourners are the 12 tribes of Israel, numbering hundreds of thousands of individuals, who were brought to repentance, by the preaching of the 144,000 Jewish with 12,000 representatives from each of the 12 tribes (except the tribe of DAN).

Finally, the persons experiencing the woes (the 21 judgements) of the Tribulation Hour are never called a "synagogue", but rather the *Church* (Acts 2:47).

As already stated, the "CHURCH" (those chosen by Jesus to be His Bride) cannot be found in Revelation chapters 6 to 18, the portion of scripture describing the horrible Tribulation hour. Israel, however is "seen in-the-midst-of the holocaust" (Rev. 12:1-3).

This correlates to with the "elect" of Matthew 24:22. Jesus said; *And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the "elect's" sake those days shall be shortened.* The "elect group" referred to here, is NOT THE CHURCH, but Israel, for God Almighty has two elect groups upon the earth; the church and Israel.

First, let us look at the church. *According as He has chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love* (Ephesians 1:4). This chosen group is called the elect in 1 Peter 1:2. However, the Church, the Bride of Christ, elected to be His Bride for all eternity, is not in view in Matthew 24:22. Instead, this text has ISRAEL, the wife of Jehovah, in mind. Yes! Many Christians may not realise that Israel is married the Jehovah (God the Father) and "The Bride" is married the Jesus (the Son). When was Israel chosen? Way back in Genesis 12:2-3, where God said, *And I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great and you shall be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curses thee: and in thee shall all of the be blessed.*

In Deuteronomy 7:7-8, the Israelites were again reminded of their "elect" status: The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people: for you were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which He had sworn to your forefathers … [He chose you]. This oath that chooses Israel as an elect group of people has never been cancelled by God. *For the gifts of God are without repentance* (Romans 11:29). God has not changed His mind. Because of God's unchanging covenant, or oath. Romans 11:26-28 declares; *And so all Israel shall be saved:* ***as it is written,*** *there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins … as touching the election (elect), they are beloved for the Father's sake.* When God (the Father) chose Israel as His elect wife, He chose her forever, because the calling of God is without change of mind. Though Jehovah's spouse (Israel) has often committed spiritual adultery, by turning to iniquity and idolatry, still Jehovah loves her because God abides faithfully. There is no doubt about it, Israel (not the church) is the elect group mentioned in the gospels for whom the days of judgement shall be shortened. Israelites are the ones who will pray that their flight for safety will not be on the Sabbath (their day of worship); who will suffer persecution in their own synagogues (only Jews meeting in synagogues); and who have the name of Jacob, and who will experience Jacob's time of trouble (Jeremiah 30:7); For Jacob is Israel. (Romans 11:26).

Hence a period of 70 weeks is determined upon Israel (Daniel 9:24). The nation of Israel has seen *Jerusalem compassed [about] with armies* (Luke 21:20) and will again observe the armies of the world poised against Jerusalem for the final war as God gathers *all nations (of the whole earth) against Jerusalem to battle* (Zechariah 14:2). This definitely is not the church! All people (who Jesus says are "Christians") slipped out through the open door into heaven in the fourth chapter before the judgements of heaven and earth began to be unleashed in the 6th chapter. They were evacuated when the shout **"COME UP HITHER."** was given.

There are those who say that Revelation 4:1 is an exclusive picture of John the Beloved in a vision, being caught away in the present of God. Therefore, they reason, this has nothing to do with anyone else, including the church. This argument is totally wrong, because Rev. 4:10 states: *The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne. and worship Him that lives for ever and ever, and cast their crown before the throne.* **John would not have been able to see them in Heaven if the church had not been Raptured yet.** When will the disciples be crowned? Immediately after the Rapture! Proof? *Thou shall be recompensed [rewarded] at the resurrection of the just.* (Luke 14:14).

Again: *And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear* [His coming], *you shall receive a crown of glory* (1 Peter 5:4). Obviously, the Judgement Seat of Christ must TAKE PLACE BEFORE the disciples are crowned. Then, they lay their crowns at Christ's feet, in verse 10 & 11, meaning that they ALREADY IN HIS PRESENCE. The only way they could have gotten there is through the "*Come up Hither"* verse ~ (Revelation 4:1)

We must also remember that John, the representative of all of God's people, is shown "the things which must be hereafter and the things that will happen, both in heaven and on the earth". Chapters 4 & 5 pictures and describes what happens in heaven, and chapters 6 through 18 picture and describes what happens on the earth ~ the Tribulation.

Now after that overview, let us continue to look at chapter 4.

V 2. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

Again, as in chapter 1:10, the Holy Spirit takes complete control of John in order to give him the most glorious vision in all time, or eternity ~ the Lord Jesus upon His throne. Most of us have never personally met many kings, queens, or presidents, but such introductions will become absolutely meaningless when we see Jesus in His majestic splendour. Praise God! That day will soon be here. We are going home imminently. Amen and amen!

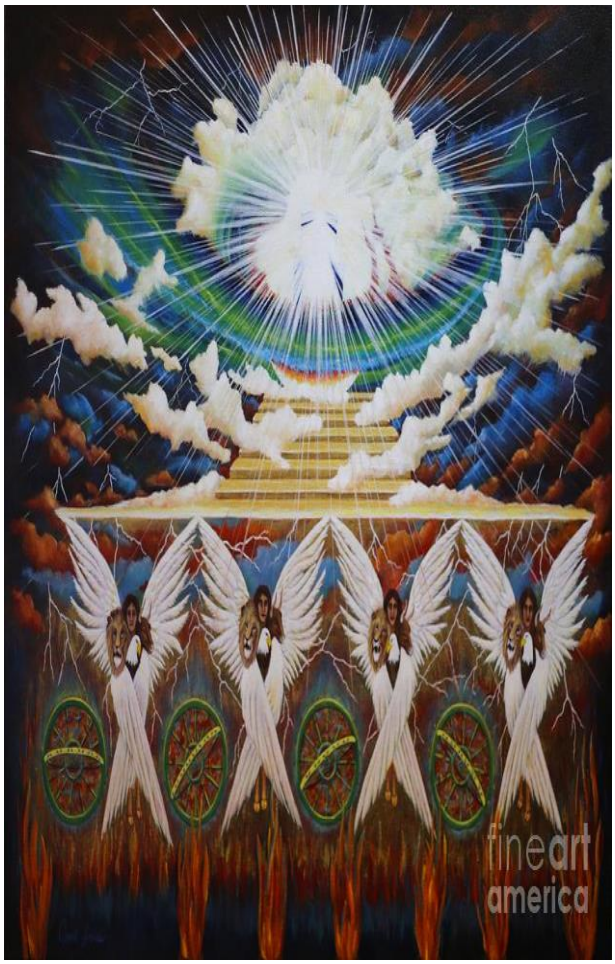
V 3. And He that sat was to look upon like jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow about his throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

Here we see a comparison of Christ with two precious stones ~ the jasper and the sardine. The jasper is *clear as crystal (Rev. 21:11) and is likened to the light of the holy Jerusalem which comes down from the glory of God* (Rev. 21:23). Imagine, glory is the first thing that strikes our eyes as we see the Lord Jesus Christ. The sardine is red, the colour of fire. This undoubtedly speaks of the righteous wrath (anger) of God and the judgement that is to fall on the earth in chapter through 18. The rainbow, resembling and emerald, proves that the impending judgement will not come through a flood (because of God's promise to Noah in Genesis 9:13 ~ but that it will be a holocaust of fire. After describing the throne and its occupant, John indicates the presence of another group, situated in heaven, in the very presence of the Lord.

V 4. And round about the throne, were twenty-four seats: and upon the seats I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white raiment: and they had on their heads, crowns of gold.

These are not angels, for elders always depict members of the human race. What members? They are redeemed of the Lord. They are also in resurrection bodies, as is the Lord, for they sit down. An immaterial spirit cannot sit. A material body is necessary in order to sit on a material throne. Christ possesses such a new glorified body (Luke 24:39), and when we see Jesus, *we shall be like him.* (1 John 3:2). The elders are clothed in white raiment. One would have difficulty trying to put a white coat on a spirit, for it would continually fall to the floor! The Book of Revelation cannot be spiritualised. This is the real Jesus and these are real people. In fact, since the Judgement Seat took place, immediately after the command to *come up hither* of verse 1 ~ these elders are already wearing their crowns, which they will place at the Master's feet in verse 11.

Who are these 24 elders? Some believe they are the 24 groups, or orders within the Levitical Priesthood. This in turn, represents all-of the believers in Christ for, through Him as High Priest, every Christian is a member of *the Royal Priesthood* (1 Peter 2:9).



Others believe the 24 elders represent the 12 tribes of Israel, and the 12 Apostles, for a total of 24. In other words, the elders represent God's people of all ages. This is a good possibility, because in Revelation 21 it describes the New Jerusalem, and the names of the 12 tribes are inscribed on the 12 gates, and the names of the 12 apostles are found on the 12 foundation pillars of the Temple (Rev. 21:12-14). Regardless of which view you have, the 24 elders represent the Children of God, in the presence of the Lord, BEFORE the horrible Tribulation begins in chapter 6. A preview of the judgement(s) about to be unleashed upon the whole world is indicated in the following verse.

V 5. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Lightning, thunder, and voices speak of judgment. Rumblings resound through the heavens, as the saints are informed of what is about to occur on the earth. There will be 21 judgements, made up of seven judgements from the Father, seven judgements from the Son, and seven judgements from the Holy Spirit. [3 x 7 = 21]

The present hour is so late, prophetically speaking, that this very scene could happen soon ~ even in our lifetimes. We may go home momentarily, to become the very participants around the throne!

Jesus is coming and is at the door. (Matthew 24:33) But wait! The seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the *seven spirits of God, pictures the Holy Spirit in all-of His perfection, for "seven" always denotes flawlessness, perfection, completeness in the Bible. (Refer to the seven characteristics of the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 11:2). This blessed Holy Spirit is also involved in the impending judgement. Each member of the Trinity is righteously indignant over the earth's inundation with wickedness and participates unitedly in the 21 seal, trumpet, and bowl judgements, which occur in chapters 6 through 18.*

V 6. And before the throne there was a sea of glass, like unto crystal: and in-the-midst-of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

Although thunderous judgement shall soon be released upon the earth, perfect peace surrounds God's throne. The glassy sea depicts calmness, a sea untroubled by wind or storms. This is THE CHURCH, at rest in heaven before the storm occurs upon the earth. Hallelujah!

V 7. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face like a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

V 8. And the four beasts had each of them 6 wings about him: and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lords God Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come.

These verses are symbolic. Always take every work of the Bible "literally" UNLESS God specifically indicates that it is figurative. In this text with the words "like a" and "as a," clearly expressing symbolism.

The term "*beast", in Greek is "Zoon," and means "a living creature. These are LITERAL, CREATED BEINGS.* At this point, the symbolic and figurative expressions depict their strength and knowledge. Thus, they have eyes before and behind, to see all things clearly and accurately. By comparing the characteristics of these living creatures with Isaiah 6:1-3, we see they are undoubtedly seraphim ~angels of God ~ created to praise, exalt and to revere the Lord. These beings are not monstrosities; instead, they are a picture of beauty. Within each species there is always a leader ~ the lion among wild beasts, the calf among domestic animals, and the eagle among birds, and man among all creatures. This is the portrait set before us ~ angels in all of their magnificence continually praising the Lord, saying; Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come. This threefold adulation of holiness is for the Father, the Son, and for the Holy Spirit ~ the three–in-One (1 John 5:7). The description ~ *which was, and is, and is to come*, is the title of the Father (Rev. 1:4), the Son (Rev. 1:5), and also the Holy Spirit, who always *was, and is, and is to come, for the Trinity works unitedly. The praising of God by these living creatures is contagious and the entire group of God's people, depicted by the 24 elders erupts in praise, joining them to worship the King.*

V 9. And when these beasts give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the throne; who lives for ever and ever.

V 10. The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him, that lives for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the thrones, saying,

V 11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power: for thou hats created all things, and for thy pleasure they are created.

This is one of the most glorious moments in heaven. The crowned saints lay their rewards at the feet of Jesus. They lay aside their rewarded glory, to add to His glory, thereby giving all glory Him. They know that their victories came only because of His power working within them. The praise session is concluded. With the words ***thou are worthy Oh Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are created to receive glory and honour, and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are created.***

Imagine; both the angels and the elders praise God for creating them! This proves there will be no evolutionists in heaven. Instead, they will join Darwin in singing songs about their ancestors ~ the monkeys ~ in a place where air-conditioning does not exist. **JESUS IS COMING! PREPARE! GET READY FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD!** Be with the blessed host when the greatest praise festival in the entire universe and heaven occurs!

CHAPTER FIVE: OPENING THE SEVEN SEALS

Bible chapters were first introduced in the Vulgate Latin Bible in 1555 and in the First "English" Geneva Bible in 1557. They are not inspired, but greatly assist in one finding specific Bible Texts. Unfortunately, sometimes they break the continuity of a vision or study. Such is the case here. Because John continues to describe the heavenly vision seen in chapter four, this chapter is really a continuation of chapter 4, and there should not have been any break in the vision, by a chapter heading. [This would have also made the Book of Revelation just 21 chapters, matching the 21 judgements].

V 1. And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. The book in the right hand of Jesus Christ is actually a scroll of either sheep skin, or papyrus, or vellum [a strong cream-coloured paper.] Its subject is REDEMPTION, and its contents unlock the remainder of this chapter. The message is contained on the inside and outside, and is enclosed by seven seals.

V 2. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice; Who is worthy to open the book, and to lose the seals thereof?

The search for a member of the human race, past, or present, or any rank of angel to open the book proves fruitless. NONE is worthy!

V 3. And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

John is Heartbroken! There was not even a man worthy to "look upon this Book".

V 4. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

John's lament is to do with the fact that this scroll is also the title deed to the earth. AS long as it remains SEALED, Satan will be in complete control of the planet.

V 5. And one of the elders said unto me; weep not: Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has prevailed to open the book, and to lose the seven seals thereof.

John's weeping ends at the place where all tears are dried. He is pointed to Christ where tears are turned into joy. Christ is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David. Since Judah is the leading tribe of Israel, and the lion is the king of the beasts, Christ is thus pictured when He comes as Israel's King (Rev. 19:16). It is at this same moment that the Lord God gives *unto Him the throne of his father David.* (Luke 1:32). Let us continue to confirm that it is our Saviour that John sees.

V 6. And I beheld, and lo, in-the-midst-of the throne and of the four beasts, and in-the-midst-of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all-of the earth.

As previously mentioned, the seven-seal scroll is the title deed to the earth and its subject is redemption. *The Lamb of God* (John 1:29), who earned the right by redemption, to the title deed of the earth, is the ONLY ONE who is worthy to open the seals. This is the *Lamb of God who died for you and for me.* YES, *Jesus Christ died for your sins* (1 Corinthians 15:3) ~ *there is salvation in no-one else!* He shed His precious blood to purchase our redemption, *for the blood of blood of Jesus Christ [God's ONLY SON] cleanses us for all sin* (1 John 1:7).

John, who recorded the fact that Jesus was *the Lamb of God,* when He walked upon the earth, now says that no one can overcome *BUT by the blood of the Lamb.* (Rev. 12:11). "Have you been to Jesus for your cleansing power? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" There is no other way! Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins (Hebrews 9:22). This Lamb is worthy because of the sacrifice He paid for your sin and mine. Yes, worthy is the Lamb to be praised for time and eternity.

The Lamb's seven horns picture strength. Jesus said: *All [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth* (Matthews 28:18). The seven eyes picture the fact that He sees everything each of us does: (nothing is hidden from him) *All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with who we have to do* (Hebrews 4:13). Since "seven" means perfection, there will no mistakes made as the judgement is meted out, because the seven spirits of God ~ a picture of the Holy Spirit in all-of His fullness ~ rest upon Christ, without measure. Coupling His power (seven horns), His all-seeing vision (seven eyes), along with His filling of the Spirit of God in a sevenfold way (Isaiah 11:1-2), not one mistake will be made during the Tribulation hour. The One found worthy now acts ~ (Remember, there will be no appeals).

V 7. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat on the throne.

So, here we see that God the Father, is still sitting on the Throne, but that Jesus, the Son, is given that authority to open the scroll.

V 8. And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.

The twenty-four elders, who represent all of God's saved people, share in this glorious moment. The praise is so spectacular that the redeemed break out in song. What a heavenly choir! The largest ever assembled! Listen to them!

V 9. And they [sang] a new song, saying thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and has redeemed us [back] to God, by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

V 10. And has made us unto our God, kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

The song is in appreciation of the fact that Christ was slain on Calvary's cross, that His precious blood was shed (1 Peter 1:19), and that it was shed for the entire world ~ [both believer & unbelievers alike ~ while we were yet sinners, He died for us]. This includes Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Catholics, Baptists, Pentecostals, & Evangelicals. Some Christians think they are going to have their own little corner in heaven ~ well I got news for you; there are no fences in heaven! People have to get the revelation that we are all equal at the foot of the cross, because we were all sinners, and without the blood of Jesus Christ being shed for us, we would ALL still be sinners. Another thing; I have studied the scriptures for more than 60 years, and I cannot find one scripture, where a "denomination" went to the cross for my sins ~ but I can find plenty where Jesus went to the cross for my sins. Maybe it is time to become "followers of Christ". Not "followers of denominations".

Christ's sacrifice was for ALL kindreds, ALL tongues, and ALL people, and ALL nations. God loves the whole world! The choir also sings about their soon return with Him when He comes as *King of Kings* (Rev. 19:11). At that time, the armies of heaven will follow Him upon white horses. At this point, the angels also join in praising the Lamb …

V 11. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about throne and the beast and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.

V 12. Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour, and glory and blessings.

Notice that this passage is not a song (even though we sing it as such). Nowhere in scripture does the Bible teach that angels sing. They recite their praise, whereas the CHURCH Triumphant sings her glorious message. The angels, associated with the Lord since their creation, know Him as few know Him ~ for they have lived in His presence for thousands of years. They praise the Lamb for seven reasons: (1) His power; (2) His spiritual riches; (3) His wisdom; (4) His Might; (5) His honour; (6) His glory; and (7) His blessings. Carnal Christians, who will not bow in worship to Christ here on earth, soon will!

V 13. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, Heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

At this point in time Philippians 2:9-11 will be fulfilled: *Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus, EVERY KNEE shall bow (irrespective of your religious beliefs), of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

What is the response as the heavenly hosts envision this future hour?

V 14. And the beasts said Amen, And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped Him that lives for ever and ever.

Notice they get a head start. They cannot wait to begin their worship of the Lamb ~ The Lord Jesus Christ!

CHAPTER SIX: THE TRIBULATION HOUR BEGINS

As we begin chapter six, which introduces the Tribulation Hour, upon the earth, a word of explanation is necessary, concerning the placement of signs.

Some sincere Christians say, "Matthew 24:14 states that the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all-of the world for a witness unto all-of the nations and THEN the end shall come. Since there are some tribes who have not yet heard the gospel, therefore Jesus cannot return." Such people have their "signs" in the wrong place, because the Rapture (Jesus coming in the clouds for "the calling away of the saints") is a signless, timeless event. Let us understand why.

What relationship exists between the Rapture and the prophetic signs? Absolutely none! The Rapture is the evacuation of the "Betrothed" (Christians selected by Jesus to be part of His Bride), before the Great Judgement of the Tribulation Hour. It is a "meeting in the heavenlies" (as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18) and NOT Christ's return to Earth. Since His "first coming" was to the earth, His "second coming" must also be to earth. The Rapture, then, is not a "coming to earth", but a "meeting in the clouds". Seven years later we (The Bride) return with Him, and all-of the prophetic signs point to "this coming", when Jesus Christ returns to the earth.

Watch the simplicity of these statements unfold. Take two Bibles and place them side by side. Open one to the Book of Revelation, chapter 6, and the other to Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 17, or Luke 21. Compare the signs in these chapters with those in found in the Book of Revelation. You will see that they are identical! The texts are practically the same.

The Church is Raptured in Rev. 4:1, and Disciples ~ represented by the 24 elders in Rev. 4:10-11 ~ are placing their crowns at the Saviour's feet BEFORE the signs and judgements of the Tribulation Hour begins in Chapters 6 through 18. The signs then, are post-Rapture and Pre-Revelational. Therefore, the signs are Post-Rapture and Pre-Revelational. In other words, they are fulfilled AFTER the Rapture, and BEFORE the Revelation ~ AFTER Christ calls His saints home to heaven, and BEFORE He returns with them to earth. Not one sign needs to be fulfilled prior to the Rapture, because all-of the signs point to the Revelation, or the "revealing of Christ" to the earth (the second time). Thus, there is a period of seven years following the Rapture during which time every sign can be adequately fulfilled. This, of course, is the Tribulation Hour, after we Christians have been Raptured.

At this point, every disciple should praise the Lord, because the next statement is utterly fantastic! Since the signposts puts Christ's return to earth, and since we disciples return with Him, then the logical deduction is that all signs point to our return with Christ.

If you have your eyes wide open, then you will realise that there are signs all around us that are casting their shadows over this world. They are all beginning to be fulfilled. *There will be wars & rumours of wars, there will be signs in the heavens, (Blood moons), there will be signs on the earth, (bushfires, floods, famine, pestilence [diseases]), and signs under the earth (earthquakes & volcanoes).* God is trying to get our attention! The prophecies that take place after we (disciples) are gone up into heaven are already beginning to take place. If the signs indicate that we are coming back with Jesus soon, then the Rapture is much closer than many churches think it is, and when it happens, they will be unprepared for it, because only seven years later Jesus will return with His church, to judge the Nations.

A number of sealed judgements in this chapter deserve special attention. Each will be examined later in detail.

First, in Rev. 6:2, we are told of a rider on a white horse. this coincides with what Jesus said in Matthew 24:3-5, when His disciples asked Him; *What shall be the signs of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them; Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ.* **The rider on the white horse in revelation chapter 6 depicting the first seal is a counterfeit!** Satan can never think up anything new himself, he always attempts to imitate and do everything that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to do (to take the glory away from Jesus). The Lord is seated on a white Horse in Rev. 19:11, when He returns with you & me to the earth (as His Bride).

Jesus did not come down to earth in Revelation chapter 6 (second coming) and then somehow go back into Heaven, and stay there for seven years and then come back again (third time) with His bride.

All throughout Scripture there is only a "First coming" to earth, and a "Second coming" to earth, with His bride. Thus, seven years before Christ returns to earth, the Antichrist also mounts a white horse. This event is identical to the events described in Matthew 24:3.

Second, one should note Rev. 6:3-4: And when He had opened the second seal, I heard the second beasts say; Come and see; And there went out another horse that was **red**; and power was given to him to kill that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. This is the second sign that Jesus mentioned: that there would be wars and rumour of wars (Matthew 24:6) [Russia's **"red"** army invading Ukraine is a good example.]

Thirdly:

V 5-6 states: And when He had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him has a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in-the-midst-of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see that hurt not the oil and the wine.

This is a picture of mass starvation and agrees with Christ's third sign: ***<u>There shall be famines!</u>*** (Matthew 24:7).

In verses 7 & 8 we are told;

V 7 & 8. And when He had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale (green) horse: and his name that sat on him was Death and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over a fourth (1/4) part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with beasts of the earth.

The fourth seal judgement agrees with Christ's statement: [There shall be] *pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers (many) places,* destroying thousands, yes millions (Matthew 24:7).

V 9. And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held.

This is the fifth sign Jesus gave in Matthew 24:8-9. *These are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and (they) shall kill you: and you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.* [There will come a time, in the not to distant future, when all nations will hate the name of Jesus and everything it stands for, and there will be mass persecution against Christians in ALL nations. Are you ready to be tested?]

Finally, in verses Rev. 6:12-16 John tells us;

V 12-16. And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casts its untimely figs, when she is shaken with a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

The sixth seal is the sixth sign Jesus mentioned in Matthew 24:29: *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven.* [Notice here in these verses that two members of the Trinity are mentioned. The One who sits on the throne (God the Father) and the Lamb, (Jesus) who is reading out the decrees as each seal is opened.]

Thus, it is evident that Matthew, Mark, and Luke contain the same signs as the Book of Revelation. However, we must all realise that each of these signs mentioned above is completed and/or fulfilled AFTER Rev. 4:1, where **THE CHURCH** is called into heaven, "in a twinkling of an eye" by the phrase; "Come up hither." As previously stated, these signs that are to be fulfilled, *after we are gone* are **already transpiring**. We see them daily in world event before our eyes. According to today's **"Bible Headline Events", these signs are already happening and indicating that you and I will soon return Jesus. However, to "return with Jesus", we must first go home to heaven, (via the rapture) and then return soon with Him.** Surely that momentous event is at the door ~ or just around the corner. This "bird's eye view" of the chapter and the discussions on the prophetic signs and the relationship of the Rapture and the Revelation (Revealing) has given us a basis upon which to study this chapter in more detail.

In chapters 6 through 18, we witness first-hand the events which take place upon the earth during the Tribulation. This presentation/explanation is so important, that Jesus spends enough time explaining these events that it takes up two-thirds of the Book of Revelation ~ a total of thirteen chapters. If Jesus thinks it is that important, then so should we. Please not that three additional Bible verses graphically describe this hour of horrendous judgement;

(1) Jeremiah 30:7; *Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob's trouble,* ***but he shall be saved out of it****;*

(2) Daniel 12:1; *And at that time, shall (Archangel) Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of the people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time, thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the Book, and*

(3) *Matthew 24:21: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be (again).*

These scriptures inform us that the Tribulation shall be earth's bloodiest hour. There will not have been anything in past centuries to equal it, neither any event in the future, to match that is to be unleased upon the planet and its inhabitants. These catastrophic calamities arrives through twenty-one judgements which are described as the Seven Seals, the Seven Trumpets, and the Seven Bowls (or vials). The Trinity is fully involved in these judgements. At the breaking of each seal, the blowing of each trumpet, and the outpouring of each bowl, a new judgement is released. The seal judgements are found in Revelation 6:1 through to 8:1. The first 6 judgements are found in chapter 6, and then chapter 7 is a parenthesis, before the seventh seal judgement takes place in chapter 8, verse 1.

Now let us look at this chapter greater detail.

THE FIRST SEAL

V 1. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were, the voice of thunder, and one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

At this command, the apostle sees the ONE who is worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof, the blessed Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus, beginning the work of Judgement. Immediately, John hears the noise of thunder ~ a sign of impending catastrophe ~ as well as one of the living creatures (angels) saying, *Come and see.* The words*, "and see"* are not in the original, just the word *COME*. It is a command given to the rider on the white horse, the infamous Antichrist. His time has arrived!

V 2. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him handa bow: and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Satan can never come up with new ideas himself. He always tried to duplicate or imitate the works of God. Back in the days of Moses, the demon-possessed magicians of Pharaoh were able to accomplish the same miracles as Aaron. This has always been Satan's ploy. He is not the Creator ~ GOD is! All Satan can do is imitate, or fake the works of the Almighty.

This rider appears at the beginning of the Tribulation period. There can be no such hour without him. Since he is the master counterfeiter, who is he imitating? The answer is in Rev. 19:11-16,

which describes Christ's return to earth, at the conclusion of the Tribulation period. The "fake" begins it, and the "Saviour" ends it!

John says, *And I saw heaven opened.* This is the second time an opening appears in heaven (Rev. 19:11), to provide an exit for Christ and His Bride, as they return to earth. As heaven opens, John beholds *a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he does judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses. Clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

This is the coming of the true Christ. Since our Christ is God, the Antichrist also proclaims himself as God. *Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he, as God, sits in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God* (2 Thessalonians 2:4.) Don't worry, we will expose this hypocritical impostor later. For the moment we will just skim the surface.

The Antichrist comes to power through an international peace pact (Daniel 9:27). This is why the rider on the first white horse has a bow but no arrows. The Antichrist conquers through diplomacy, as a king, hence the crown. In fact, when he takes control over the nations, via a world government (Economic Babylon), power [is] *given him over all kindreds, and tongues and nations* (Revelations 13:7]

The Antichrist is rapidly followed by three other riders of judgement. Together, these four horsemen of the apocalypse bring heartache upon the whole earth such has never been seen, experienced, in all-of earth's history. The Antichrist is called the *Beast* because of his character (Rev. 13:2-3), because he ascends out of the abyss (Rev. 17:8) and because he receives his power, his throne, and his authority from Satan (Rev. 13:2). The Antichrist's ascendancy to the world's leadership signals the unleashing of the remaining twenty (20) judgements.

The peace that was made by the first rider is broken by the one who mounts the red horse. This is in harmony with the first rider's ~ or Antichrist's program. Daniel 9:27 outlines the peace-package as well as its failure. *And he* [the Antichrist] *shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in-the -midst-of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.*

When peace is confirmed, the Jews will feel at ease to conduct sacrifices without fear of war. However, in-the-midst-of the week, or literally in the middle of the *heptad,* the contract is broken. The term *"heptad"* in the original means "seven years". As *decade* means "ten years" in English, so *heptad* means "seven years" in Greek. Now we understand more fully why the Tribulation covers a timetable of seven years ~ simply because Daniel 9:27 states that the Antichrist will make his proposal for a *heptad*~ seven years ~ and then break it in-the-midst-of the *heptad*, or after three-and-one-half years ($3^{1/2}$) years.

THE SECOND SEAL

V 3. And when He had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

V 4. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

One of the nations that marches during this period of time is RED Russia. How interesting that a rider on a "RED" horse takes peace from the earth! Could RED Russia play such a major role during this hour?

In Ezekiel 38:2 the terms *Magog, Meshech, Tubal & Rosh* are mentioned, in connection with the march to the Middle East for the "battle of battles" BEFORE ARMAGEDDON. Listen to the message

that God gave to Ezekiel: *Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophecy against him.* [Ezekiel 38:2] Each of these names can be located within the present-day Russia. Tobolsk, the eastern capital of the USSR, is the ancient "Tubal" mentioned in the text. It is southwest of Siberia on modern maps ~ the place where Garry Powers was shot down in his U 2 surveillance plane, several years ago. Meshech is Moscow. The historical names for Moscow begin with "Meshech", then "Moshoch", then "Moschi", then "Moscoty", and finally "Moscow". "ROSH" is Russia, herself.

This 'great bear' invades Israel from the north[7]: *And thou shall come up from thy place of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all-of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: and thou shall come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land:* ***It shall be in the latter days****, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me: when I shall be sanctified in thee, O God, before their eyes.* (Ezekiel 38:15-16). Russia is directly north of Israel, and Russia moves against Israel in the latter days (Ezekiel 38:8). The attack centres around the Holy Land. In fact, the name Israel is used 18 times to identify the nation being invaded in Ezekiel chapters 38-39. Such information attests to the divine inspiration of the Holy Bible, for there was not such nation in modern history called "Israel" until 14th May, 1948. [This prophecy was given the Ezekiel about 586 BC more than 2500 years before the event took place.]

This war in our future will undoubtedly occur close to, or during the Tribulation period, because the facts presented in Ezekiel's prophecy and the events described in the Book of Revelation tie together.

In fact, in Revelation 8th & 9th chapters it contain two unusual predictions concerning the woes of the Tribulation hour, which point to such a Middle East war. Rev. 8:7 mentions the burning of one-third ($^{1/3}$) of the earth as the first angel sounded. I quote: *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all the green grass was burnt up.*

In Revelation 9:18, it describes the extinction of one-third of all-of the world's inhabitants! *For by these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

The Life Pictorial Atlas, which lists land areas and population figures for every country of the world contains shocking proof that these prophecies and astronomical figures are capable of being fulfilled at the present time. According to this statistical survey, Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America incorporate a total of 56,889,581 square miles. Dividing this by 1/3rd arrives at a sum of 18,963,194 square miles ~ the amount of land that will burn during the Tribulation period, as identified in Rev. 8:7. Comparing this figure with the combined land areas of the nations predicted to align themselves for the Middle East confrontations (Daniel chapters 2, 7 & 11, and Ezekiel 38-39), and we discover that the two figures are identical ~ 1/3rd of whole earth to the exact mile, believe it or not! [Again, proving that God Almighty really does know the "end" from "The beginning" because, when these prophecies were given, many of these nations did not even exists on the map as we know them today. Let us proceed further; The Atlas also lists the population figures for the nations of the earth.

The same alignment of pro and anti-Russian nations for "the war of wars" totals 1/3rd of the world's inhabitants! Rev. 8:7 and Rev. 9:18 could become factual events, fulfilling Rev. 6:4 very soon!

THE THIRD SEAL

V 5. And when He had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

[7] Just like it invades Ukraine in March 2022.

V 6. And I heard a voice in-the-midst-of the four beasts say; A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and wine.

Famine and inflation usually follow war. The rider on the black horse produces these twin sorrows upon the earth. Ezekiel prophesied this hour: *And thy meat which you shall eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day: from time to time you shall eat it. You shall drink also water by measure … behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care.* (Ezekiel 4:10-11,16).

Leviticus 26:26 states: *You shall eat, and not be satisfied.* This is symbolised by the pair of balances in out text. The angel in Rev. 6:6 cries out; *a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny.* In Biblical times, labourers received a denarious, (or one penny), as their entire day's wages. (Matthew 20:2) A "measure" would be 16 American ounces. Just think of it! A whole day's wages for half a loaf of bread! No wonder Moses said; *you shall eat and not be satisfied.* A man will have to spend everything he has just for the necessities of life. Just think, the man works all day and brings home only enough money to buy half a loaf of breandto feed his wife and children and himself. Now, what about the oil & the wine, mentioned in verse 6 above? These items were luxuries in biblical times, and we find that there are those who will still possess them during the Tribulation. Nevertheless, the general picture is that of hunger stalking the world. Why?

Inflation, the leading economic indicator, becomes so bad during the Tribulation that precious metals actually become worthless. Those who think that hording diamonds, gold, or silver should beware, because overnight you can go to bed rich and next morning wake up poor, because you precious metals will no longer have any value, it will have been replaced overnight.

During this period of time, inflation will skyrocket and the Antichrist's numerical program "666", will replace silver and gold, and all paper money. Because of the situation, *they shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed; their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of wrath of the Lord.* Ezekiel 7:19).

In James 5:1,3 it says; *Go to now, you rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you … your gold and silver is cankered ~ (something that is evil and corrupts); and the rust of them shall be a witness against you; and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. You have heaped treasure together (here on earth) for the last days.*

Earthly treasure, then as now, brings nothing but sorrow and tears in the last days. One had better do what he can for the Lord ~ while he still can. Why leave it behind for the Tribulation hour or keep it until it becomes valueless? Every Christian should serve God with material blessings, winning souls to Him for all eternity. Jesus said; *Lay not up treasures for yourselves upon the earth, where moth and rust does corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust does corrupt, and where thieve do not break through and steal: for where your treasure is, there your heart is also.* (Matthew 6:19-21). People have to make a choice! One can either let go ~ give it to God and store it up on the other side, ~ or hang on to it, keep it, and let your greedy, unsaved relatives share it, losing it both here and forever. One must make his choice; either for the here and now, or for eternity. I pray that you make the correct choice.

THE FOURTH SEAL

The next rider on the pale (green) horse, aggravates the conditions which have been caused by the rider on the black horse. The third seal unleashes inflation and hunger upon the earth, but the fourth seal produces mass starvation and death.

V 7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

V 8. And I looked, and behold, a pale[8] horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto THEM over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

This horse is described as *pale.* The Greek word is *Chloros* from which we get the term chlorine gas. In other areas of the New Testament, we find that the word *Chloros* is translated as "green" [refer Mark 6:39, and Rev. 9:4]. The fourth rider is the deadliest! This is why his name is *DEATH* and why *HELL follows with him. [Now there is no mention that Hell is riding on a horse ~ he is just THERE!]. DEATH* destroys the physical body, whilst *HELL* swallows up the souls and spirits of those he kills with the sword, hunger, and the beasts of the earth; this could be AIDS, produced by the green monkey virus, or another manufactured virus like COVID. One quarter of the world's population dies through the brutality of the fourth rider. With the total world's population standing at 7.9 billion as of December 2021, that is 1,975,000,000 people that would perish. This could easily happen with mankind's atomic, hydrogen and neutron bombs, and these weapons can reduce the world's population within hours. Their present-day arsenals also contain chemical and biological weapons. With Russia presently threatening to use these weapons, in its war against Ukraine and the West in February-March 2022, this risk is closer than many national leaders realise. When this event occurs, no-one would want to be here, but sadly, many will still be here.

THE FIFTH SEAL

Next, the opening of the fifth seal brings forth the cries of the slain martyrs. Jesus spoke of this hour in Matthew 24:9-10. Hear His words: *Then, they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake; And then, shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.*

Please read chapter four again, and understand that this reference is made to the "Tribulation saints," composed of the elect Israelites and those Gentiles who have been converted by the preaching of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (12,000 selected from each tribe ~ except the Tribe of Dan). These persecuted saints and martyrs are not part of the CHURCH (Bride) in Heaven, these are that "other multitude" that John sees in Heaven.

V 9. And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held;

V 10. And they cried (out) with a loud voice, saying; How long, O Lord, holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

V 11. And white robes were given unto every one of them: and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

These martyred saints are seen under the altar. In the Old Testament, the alter always referred to the place where the blood had been sacrificed. Souls will be saved during the Tribulation Period. In fact, it is the greatest evangelistic event in all-of history, and they will be saved the same way as they are today ~ through the precious shed blood of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus has come and claimed His Bride, (the disciples who believed His word prior to his return in the clouds), Jesus cannot be crucified again for these souls who accept His redemption offer after He claims His Bride. They have to die to be accepted into heaven.

This is the challenge of the 21st Century Christian: "Is there enough evidence to convict me of being a Christian, if I was still present at this time?" However, in this age of grace (that we still live in), we will be eternal losers, if we continue to be "secret Christians", never testifying of our faith in Jesus Christ. Matthew 10:32-33 says: *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. BUT whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.*

[8] Some translations say green horse

Notice that these slain martyrs are crying out to Jesus. They can see Him; they can speak to Him ~ they are not "asleep". The doctrine of "soul sleep" is not taught in the Bible!

Some denominations teach that all souls sleep until the resurrection morning. NOT SO! In 2 Corinthians 5:8 Pauls says: *To be absent from the Body is to be present with the Lord.* The "soul sleep" adherents can never find time when they are absent from their bodies. If the soul remains in as state of sleep in that body until the morning that Jesus's return, the two are never separated. BUT the Bible teaches that THEY ARE SEPARATED. The physical body is asleep in one place (the grave), whilst the soul is alive is the second place (either heaven or hell). For the Christian, *to be absent from the body* means *to be present with the Lord.* That is why Paul said, *to die is gain (Philippians 1:21).*

When Jesus returns "in the clouds" (Rapture) He brings those who sleep (the dead) with Him: *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. (1 Thessalonians 4:14).* Now, how can the Lord bring the dead with Him, and still come after the dead in 1 Thessalonians 4:16? Simple! It's because the dead are in two places! The souls and spirits are with the Lord (absent from the body & present with the Lord), but their physical bodies are still in the graves. Therefore, Jesus brings the dead (the souls and the spirits that are already with Jesus) with Him, so that they may come and re-connect with their physical bodies. That is why the "dead in Christ rise first". But all-of this discussion relates to the Rapture in the clouds. The text under examination here, describes a later time ~ Tribulation Hour.

It is then that the spirit of the martyred Tribulation saints cry out. They also wear white robes. Lifeless spirits cannot cry out, or wear white robes. The solution? The spiritual being has a "temporary covering". Proof? (2 Corinthians 5:1) says; *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved [dead], we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* We may not understand everything about the spirit world, but one thing is certain ~ being in spirit form does not mean unconsciousness. Spirits move, talk, cry out, and even wear white robes. Demons are also spirits. They spoke on many occasions in the Gospels. Why? Spirits live! Away with the doctrine of "soul sleep" in any dispensation! Our loved ones are with Jesus if they died trusting in the benefits and merits of the shed Blood. They are also under the altar, just as these Tribulations saints will be later. Soon they will come forth for their eternal covering, their bodies.

Now, since we have learned that it is possible for the spirit to cry out, because the spirit never ceases to exist, we next discover that their cry is one of vengeance. Why? Because they are not under the covenant of Grace, the LOVE Covenant. Instead, they want blood. Stephen, who was under the Grace covenant when he was martyred cried out: *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* (Acts 7:60). But this is a different dispensation ~ the fulfilment of the hour mentioned by King David when he spoke of the actions of Jehovah, saying; *He makes inquisition for blood* (Psalm 9:12). This group of saints knows that prophecy is being fulfilled, and they wonder how much longer their loved ones, still alive, must suffer. The Lord speaks to them about a little more patience. There will be one more wave of persecution in Rev. 20:4. Then they will live and reign with him for 1,000 years.

THE SIXTH SEAL

V 12. And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.

V 13. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as the fig tree casts (off) her untimely figs when she is shaken by a mighty wind.

V 14. And the heavens departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

V 15. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

V 16. And said unto the mountains and rocks; Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

V 17. For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

In verse 12 above we see a great earthquake. There are four earthquakes mentioned in the Book of Revelation, namely in;

a) Rev. 6:12; b) Rev. 8: 5; c) Rev. 11:13, and d) Rev. 16:18-19.

It is interesting to note that the judgement of the first four seals were under the jurisdiction of the Antichrist. The opening of the sixth seal, begins the administration of supernatural judgements from heaven. One cannot conscientiously interpret these events figuratively. The judgements occurring in this portion of scripture are to be taken literally. And why not? Do you know that earthquakes have been associated with the judgement of God right throughout history?

Mount Sinai quaked when God descended upon it in the Fire: *And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in a fire: and the smoke therefor ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. (Exodus 19:18).*

Rocks were smashed to smithereens through earthquakes in the "Days of Elijah": *For, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before Lord. (1 Kings 19:11).*

We must also remember that there was a great earthquake in Israel when Jesus Christ died on the cross at Golgotha. *Behold, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain (torn in two) from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints, which slept arose.* (Matthew 27:51-52).

If all-of these earthquakes were real, then why would not the scene that is being described by John literally real? It is exactly what Jesus predicted for the Tribulation hour. He said; *And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken* (Luke 21:25-26).

At this time the earthquakes and the convulsions of the earth are so great, that the stars of heaven fall out of the sky like figs being shaken out of a tree prematurely. Strong winds, tornadoes, cyclones, and hurricanes also cause great destruction. The devastating earthquakes cause mountains and islands to be shifted off their foundations. These events explain why half of the world's population dies, through the multiple catastrophes that bombard the earth. [Remember, stars are like our sun, bigger than the earth, and if one hits the earth, no-one survives.] This scene is so terrifying that kings, great men, rich men, chief captains, mighty men, bond men and all free men, hide in dens, caves, and clefts in the rocks of the mountains for safety. Now we should be able to understand Christ's statement when He said; *Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth* (Luke 21:26). The situation becomes so unbearable that people of all nations plead to die, pleading for obliteration, and annihilation by crying to the mountains and the rocks saying; *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, (The Father) and from the Lamb (Jesus Christ): for the great day of wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?* (Rev. 6:16-17). Thank God, that through His mercy, His CHURCH (The Bride,) is in Heaven during this terrible Hour.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE FIRST TIME OUT

THE FINAL EVANGELISM BEFORE THE LAST SEAL

Before we look at the Seventh Seal, which is described in chapter 8, we must address a section of scripture about the last and greatest evangelistic event in history. This chapter can be divided into two sections; verses 1-8 which deals with the 144,000 Israelites, and verses 9-17, which deal the multitudinous Gentiles.

This chapter also shows God's characteristics of compassion, mercy, and love. This just reinforces what the rest of the Bible has already told us; *GOD IS LOVE!* (1 John 4:8). In fact, we also know it from John 3:16-17 which says; *For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him* ***should not*** *perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him* ***may be*** *saved.* [Notice the 2 phrases underlined clearly indicate that this is a "conditional promise"; "Should not", not [shall not] and "May be", not [will be].

It's mankind's wickedness, rebellion, rejection, and sin that produces judgement! *For the wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23), and *they that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, (shall) reap the same* (Job 4:8). The Judgements already described above were unleashed because of the hardness of men's hearts. They rebelled ~ and continue to rebel ~ for thousands of years. BUT God's mercy is so great that at this point in time, God calls a "time out" from the destruction. God Almighty loves mankind, (the human race) so much, that despite all-of their sin and wrongdoing, God Almighty still wants to save them.

He still wants men to open their hearts and come to Him (even if before this time and these events, they did not even believe that He existed). The result of this is chapter 7, which deals with the mercy of God in-the-midst-of the Tribulation. The characteristics of God never change ~ even in-the-midst-of the Tribulation. God, in His "infinite love", creates a lull before the storm, to give mankind **"one last chance"** of salvation and revival.

THE 144,000 ISRAELITES

V 1. And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

After what things? The previous events as the six seals have been opened. The fact that the angels are standing on the four corners of the earth, does not signify that the is square. God knows the shape of the earth, because He made it round. *He … sits upon the circle of the earth* (Isaiah 40:22). This statement was in the Bible in 1492 when Christopher Columbus allegedly was making a fool of himself by claiming, contrary to public opinion, that the world was round. Eurotheneses, the Greek Philosopher, handmade the same conclusion in 392 BC.

The God who made it and sits upon the circle of it knows that it is not square. Therefore, the term "the four corners of the earth", is the biblical expression of the four points of the compass; north, south, east, and west. The four angels at these four compass points administering judgement are commanded to relent, so that there might be time for the great revival, as the servants of God are sealed on their foreheads.

V 2. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried in a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea.

V 3. Saying; Hurt not the earth, neither the seas, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in the foreheads.

The wicked get their seal "666" under the super deceiver, the great imitator, the Antichrist in (Rev. 13:17-18). The "genuine believers" receive their seal from the angel of God at this point of time.

V 4. And I heard the number of them which were seals: and there were sealed 144,000 of all-of the tribes of the children of Israel.

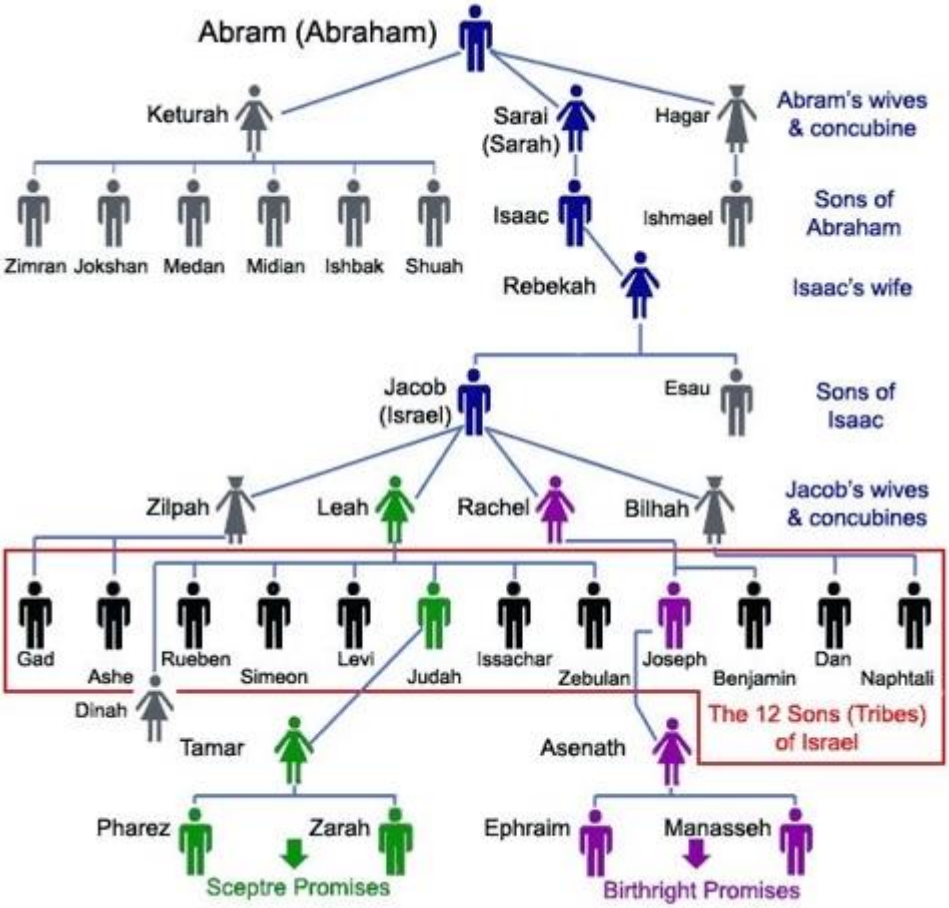
V 5. Of the tribe of Judah were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Reuben was sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Gad, were sealed 12,000.

V 6. Of the tribe of Asher were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Nephilim (Naphtali) were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Manasseh were sealed 12,000.

V 7. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed 12,000.

V 8. Of the tribe of Zebulon were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed 12,000.

Notice that the tribe of Dan, which was named as one of the 12 tribes "which came out of Egypt" in Exodus 1:4, are not included in the 144,000 who will receive the seal of God on their foreheads. The Tribe of Dan is missing. What happened them? After Joshua assigned each tribe their land They went off and worshipped idols, The Hebrew word for Dan ~ means "He has judged me".



Tribes coming out of Egypt – (Exodus 1:2-4)	Tribes Entering the Promised Land	Tribes in Revelation chapter 7
Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, **Dan**, Naphtali, Gad, Asher. (The tribes of **Joseph** not mentioned here [Manasseh & Ephraim])	Reuben (Joshua 13:15) Gand(Joshua 13:24) **Manasseh** (13:29), (16:1) **Ephraim** (14:4) (16:1) Judah (15:1) Benjamin (18:11) Simeon (19:1) Zebulun (19:10) Issachar (19:17) Asher (19:24) Naphtali (19:32) **Dan** (19:40)	Judah, Reuben, Gand(Rev. 7:5) Asher, Naphtali, **Manasseh** (Rev. 7:6) Simeon, Levi, Issachar (Rev. 7:7) Zebulon, (Joseph [**Manasseh & Ephraim**]), Benjamin (Rev. 7:8)

Now the people mentioned above as "Genuine believers" cannot be His Church, because His Church is already in heaven as indicated in Rev. 4:1.

Also, the CHURCH is not Jewish, but is composed *of all nations, tribes & tongues.* They are not people as identified by writings of various cultish church groups either.

Presently, the Jews are not certain of the tribal heritage. However, the omniscient, all-knowing God will untangle this condition "at God's appointed time." Actually, very few people today really know what their genealogy stock is. As a result of migrations, are a mixture of different nationalities. Perhaps is to best not to know one's ancestry. We might be embarrassed to learn of our ancestry and our roots! One might learn (like me) that we originated in Brittany and then went across in England and then handa government paid passage to Australia.

The 144,000 Israelites (Jewish evangelists) are anointed by the Spirit. Joel 2:28-29 describes the situation as these Spirit-filled preachers proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom. *And it shall come to pass afterwards (in the last days) that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also, upon the servants and the maidservants in those days will I pour out my Spirit.*

Now many people are confused that the Holy Spirit is present during the Tribulation Hour. We have to understand the difference between the Holy Spirit's power being in operation and the Holy Spirit being present. 2 Thessalonians 2:7 states; *For the mystery of iniquity does already work; only He who now letteth will let; until he be taken out of the way.* The word ***letteth*** *is an Old English word for* ***hinders.***

The picture being painted here is the rise of the Antichrist. 2 Thessalonians 2:6 states *You know what withholds that [the Antichrist] might be revealed in his time.* The verse 7 makes it very clear that the "hinderer" ~ the Holy Spirit ~ CONTINUES TO HINDER THE ANTICHRIST'S RISE, UNTIL THE HINDERER IS TAKEN OUT OF THE WAY.

Here is another reason millions believe in the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. Why? The Hinderer lives in the hearts of the People of God. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His* (Romans 8:9). Also, 1 Corinthians 3:16: *Know you not that you are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* Because of this truth, God's Spirit cannot be taken away unless those in whom He lives are taken. Hallelujah! One should also not that the Spirit's removal only speaks of His restraining power.

Why do I say this? The Holy Spirit is God, the third member of the Trinity. As God, He is **omniscient** (all knowing), **omnipotent** (all powerful) and **omnipresent** (everywhere at the same time). Therefore, the Holy Spirit cannot be removed from the earth because He, as God, is in all places constantly. David states in Psalm 139:7-10: *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, you are there: if I make my*

bed in hell, behold, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Since the Holy Spirit is everywhere at all times, only His restraining power and influence over sin is removed during the Tribulation Hour.

At the present time, The Christian Church is "supposed to be" *the salt of the earth* and *the light of the world* (Matthew 5:13-16). The evacuation the "The Church", in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells, is the only way His restraining influence on sin is removed, hence ridding the world of salt and light. Christians are God's preservative forces on the earth, as well as the dispellers of darkness. Imagine what happens when the Spirit's restraining force (The Church) is removed via the Rapture. Without this force being present, then literally hell will break forth on the earth. Still, during this time, His continuing personal presence on earth produces one of the greatest revivals in the history of mankind.

The message of the 144,000 Jews centres on person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was of the Old Testament prophets: *To [Jesus] gave all-of the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of (their) sins* (Acts 10:43).

In addition to preaching the message of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the 144,000 proclaim the advent of the King: *And this gospel [or good news] of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then the end shall come* (Matthew 24:14). THIS IS NOT THE MESSAGE OF HIS FIRST COMING ~ (Rapture ~ in the clouds) referred to in Rev. 4:1, but His SECOND COMING TO THE EARTH (revelation or revealing) referred to in Rev. 19:16.

In order to get the full picture of the message of the "kingdom messengers" proclaim, one must study the life of John the Baptist. John's message was: (1) Individual Repentance: He said; *Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand* (Matthew 3:2); (2) the blood: again, He said; *Behold, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world* (John 1:29). This message of repentance and the blood was to prepare the hearts of the people for the third part of his message ~ the coming of the King. Though Christ was rejected by the Jews in the days of John the Baptist, Jesus will be accepted when the 144,000 Jews preach the same identical message.

At this time the worldwide revival ensues, for one of the elders (representing the Church in heaven) asks; *What are these which are arrayed in white robes (like us)? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir you know. And he said to me; These are they which came out of the great Tribulation, and have washed the robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb* (Rev. 7:13-14). Let us study this God-sent, Holy Spirit-empowered revival, step by step.

THE MULTITUDINOUS GENTILES

V 9. After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

John states: *After this.* After what? After the 144,000 Jewish evangelists are sealed by the Spirit of God. God's message is always to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles. That is why Romans 1:6 declares; *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Gentiles).* Since the Jews have heard, John sees a great multitude standing before the throne, which no man could count, from every race and nationality. Their white robes prove that they have trust in the message of the blood and are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. The waving of the palms in their hands signifies victory. They have overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. They are joyous because they have survived the first six seals of judgement and their joy leads to praise.

V 10. They cried with a loud voice, saying; Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

This multitude recognises the source of their salvation and victory. They cannot keep silent. Who can be silent when the grace of God does its mighty work of salvation in one's heart?

Immediately the angels join with them in praise to the Father and to the Son.

V 11. And all-of the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.

V 12. Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto God for ever and ever. Amen.

What a glorious scene in heaven as the angels surrounding the throne and God's people (represented by the 24 elders) fall on their faces in worship, praise, and adoration!

Their seven-fold praise session to God centres around: (1) Blessing; (2) Glory; (3) Wisdom; (4) Thanksgiving; (5) Honour; (6) Power and (7) Might …. Forever and forever! NO wonder they say, "Amen!"

Now note that the angels do not sing their praises, but they chant their praises, as they have been doing since before the creation of the world. Remembering that the 4 beasts and the angels, were created by God before the universe was created. (Remember Jesus says that He saw Lucifer fall from heaven like a lightning flash, before the foundations of the world.) After this glorious event, one of the elders asks a question;

V 13. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me; What are these which are arrayed in white robes? (Like us) And whence come they? (Where did they come from?)

The answer is then given;

V 14. And I said unto him, Sir you know. And he said to me. There are they which came out of the great Tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Here is another proof that **THE CHURCH** is in heaven, not still upon the earth. Why? Because John does not recognize this group of people. He knows the **Raptured Church** is in heaven in Rev. 4:1, but not the ones on earth in this text. These are "Tribulation Saints" who have *washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* Please hear God once again; *These are they which came out of the Tribulation.* That settles it, and explains why John, who recognises the Church in heaven ~ is in a fog concerning this multitude of individuals. They are new brothers and sisters in Christ, though unknown to John. They have been saved in a "different period of time ~ a time when he and the Church were already in heaven. The Church was not on the earth to make their acquaintance.

The next scene is exciting. Each group saved during different dispensations of time, have different duties to perform. **The Church** is the Bride of Christ, and enjoys the 1,000-year honeymoon upon the existing earth (Rev. 20:4) They reign as rulers, kings, and priests (1 Peter 2:9) and (Rev. 1:6). **The 144,000** serve as bodyguards of the Lamb and His Bride (Rev. 14:4). The **Gentiles saved during the Tribulation** will be Temple servants, waiting on Christ and His Bride.

They serve in the glorious Temple (described in Ezekiel chapters 40-48) which is set up immediately after Russia ~ under the names of **GOG, Magog, Meshech, Tubal, and Rosh,** is destroyed (Ezekiel chapters 38-39). Everything is so nearby. **Russia has already started its march into Ukraine (March 2022)**, then later the Antichrist will be smashed, and the Lord will return with His Bride. At that time the Millennial Temple is erected and it is here that the Gentiles serve.

Let is backtrack just a little and see what has recently been happening in Israel, in preparation for these events. The New SANHEDRIN consisting of 70 Rabbis was reconvened in 2006, the first time since the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. In 2015 the New Sanhedrin appointed their first High Priest since 70 AD. The Knesset (Israel's parliament) passed a law which states (for the first time) that Messianic Jews have the same legal rights in Israel as Orthodox Jews. Then there was a meeting in which the High Priest challenged the President of Iran to rebuild the Temple in Israel, just like his forefathers had done. The altar is already constructed, outside the City Wall and has been dedicated and consecrated and is being used to kill the Passover Lamb and sprinkle the blood on the Temple Mount. God Almighty has set everything in place for the next move.

The altar is already constructed, dedicated, and consecrated and is being used to kill the Passover Lamb and sprinkle the blood on the Temple Mount. **WAKE UP WORLD!!!**

V 15. Therefore, they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple: and He that sits on the throne shall dwell with them.

Because God is dwelling among them, the deprivations they suffered under the Antichrist are now abolished. Under the reign of the world dictator, there was little food and one had to take the **Mark of the Beast**, 666, to obtain sustenance. These believers who refused to take the number 666 had to eke out an existence day by day. Now, the Lord is in their midst, the picture changes!

V 16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

This refers to the scorching effects of the sun during the Tribulation Hour. [As] *the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sin; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.* (Rev. 16:8). In addition, the word "heat" refers to the fires of persecution, as described in 1 Peter 1:7. Such trials are now finished forever.

From this point onwards, "the people of God" from all dispensations, enjoy the continual presence of God. Their days of suffering, heartache, and abuse, by an ungodly world is finished. Tears are wiped away, as every remembrance of past sorrows is obliterated from their minds.

V 17. For the Lamb which is in-the-midst-of the throne shall feed them; and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE SEVENTH SEAL

We now witness the opening of the seventh seal. This seal, includes the seven trumpet judgements. **They are so terrifying that, as they are opened, all-of the heavenly host become silent**. The judgements which follow are similar to the judgements which occurred when Moses went to Pharaoh and told him to "let my people go" ~ but this time they occur to the whole world.

V 1. And when He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven, about the space of half an hour.

For the angels, who have been worshipping the Lord, since before time began, what could possibly cause them to be silent in heaven for 30 minutes? For the men who are now in heaven as well, what causes them to be silent in heaven for 30 minutes? Obviously, this is a momentous occasion, as everyone waits in anticipation, for what is to come:

V 2. And I saw the seven angels that stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

These trumpet judgements were prophesied by Enoch, as recorded in Jude verses 14-15, and were anticipated by the psalmists as well. In Psalm 96:13 it states: *He comes to judge the earth, He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.* Paul also confirmed these judgements in Acts 17:31, mentioning a time when *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.* (Romans 1:18). But before the first trumpet sends forth its blast in verse 7, we witness an unusual prayer meeting in the next three verses.

V 3. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a gold censor; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne.

This Angel, is not one of the seven, but Jesus Christ Himself, because He ministers both to God and to man (1 Timothy 2:5). The Saviour also appeared as the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament on many occasions. He was on the Mountain, when Abraham was to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God; He wrestled with Jacob; walked among Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the fiery furnace; and made numerous other Old Testament visits to His people.

This mediator between God and mankind *ever lives to make intercession* (Hebrews 7:25); and now stands at the altar adding incense (efficacy) to the prayers being offered by the saints of God on earth. They are imprecatory prayers for judgement, as in Rev. 6:10. They cry out; *how long, O Lord, holy and true, do you not judge (them) and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* At this point in time, their prayers have reached the throne of God!

V 4. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

Now! These prayers are answered, and judgement is prepared.

V 5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire off the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

What a contrast from the silence of verse 1. Now, every noise imaginable is heard as judgement is prepared.

V 6. And the seven angels, who had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound.

At this moment, the heavenly armies says; **"Ready! Aim! Fire"!** This is it.

FIRST TRUMPET

V 7. The first angel sounded, and there was hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and one third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

We have no difficulty understanding this verse literally. The same kind of judgement occurred in Exodus 9:22-23: *And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all-of the land Egypt …And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground: and the Lord rained down hail upon the land of Egypt. So, there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.*

Now we know that it hailed where the Egyptians were, but it did not hail where the Jews were living in Goshen. **But this time it is raining hail mingled with fire, all over the whole world**. It happened in Egypt! It can happen again!

SECOND TRUMPET

V 8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and one third part of the sea became blood:

This judgement is undoubtedly a giant meteor falling into the sea. Notice the phrase *"as it were, a mountain"*. This again, is a symbolic description. Always take every word of the Bible "literally" UNLESS God tells you to take it figuratively. This passage is an example of the latter. Something gigantic, *as, or like a mountain, (a big chunk of rock – the size of a mountain) is cast into the sea* and causes *one third of the sea to become blood.*

A similar occurrence was experienced in Moses's day: *And the Lord spoke unto Moses; Say unto Aaron; Take thy rod, and stretch out thy hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood: and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the site of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all-of the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. And the fish that [were] in the river died* [Exodus 7:19-21].

V 9. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died: and the third part of the ships was destroyed.

God's second trumpet is so horrendous that one-third of all the creatures in the sea die, and one-third of all the ships are destroyed. God only knows what horrendous plagues will result when nuclear war under, upon, and above the ocean takes place.

THIRD TRUMPET

V 10. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third-part of the rivers, and upon the fountain of waters.

V 11. And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third-part of the waters becomes wormwood: and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

Strange that "*Chernobyl"* in the Ukraine language Bible means "Wormwood". This judgement also occurred in Moses' day; *Behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the rivers, and they shall be turned to blood* (Exodus 7:17). Now the phenomenon is repeated. A star, or meteor, soaring through space, speeds towards earth. When it strikes, one-third of our planet's water supply becomes a deadly poison. Rivers springs and wells are all affected. Something similar happened in decades past. A volcanic eruption in the Aleutian Islands in 21st March 1823 caused the waters in that area to become bitter and unfit for human consumption. This could easily happen again.

God created every star, and He knows their exact locations, and He has named them all. Job 9:9 states: *[He] makes Arcturus, Orion, and Pleaides, and the chambers of the south.* He also knows where the star *WORMWOOD*, meaning "bitterness", is located, because Jeremiah 9:15 says: *Therefore, thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink* (Jeremiah 9:15). **God says what He means, and means what He says. It will happen!**

FOURTH TRUMPET

V 12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third-part of the sun was smitten, and a third-part of the moon, and a third-part of the stars; so, as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third-part of it, and the night likewise.

V 13. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, Woe, Woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of three angels, which are yet to sound!

This fourth judgement has to do with earth's luminaries ~ the sun, the moon, and the stars. We note that, on the fourth day, of Creation, God said; *Let there be lights in the firmament of Heaven.* (Genesis 1:4). Now, at the blast of the 4th trumpet, one third of the light produced by these bodies

is extinguished. This too, happened in Moses' day. *And the Lord said unto Moses; Stretch out thine hand towards heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand towards the heaven: and there was a thick darkness in all-of the land of Egypt for three days: They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days* (Exodus 10:21-23). **It happened once: it will happen again!**

Sadly, the worst is yet to come. An angel flying through the midst of heaven cries out: *Woe, woe, woe!* This correlates directly with Daniel chapter 9, where the seventieth week (already discussed in Chapter 6) is described. ***The first 3.5 years of the Tribulation are not nearly as severe as the final 3.5 years.***

In Matthew 24:8, the Lord describes the first half of the time period as the ***beginning of sorrows.*** However, He referred to the final 3.5 years as the ***Great Tribulation.*** (Matthew 24:21). As the tribulation hour approaches its climax, the judgements become more and more severe, and the loss of life is greater. This is especially noticed as we observe that two verses cover each of the first four trumpets. However, for trumpet #5, it requires 12 verses, and for trumpet #6, it requires 9 verses.

CHAPTER NINE: THE JUDGEMENTS CONTINUE

Chapter Nine contains detailed descriptions of these last two "woes," which were foretold by the angel in the previous chapter.

THE FIFTH TRUMPET

V 1. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

The star that John sees ~ a male personage ~ is without a doubt, the devil of verse 11. The Greek tense in verse 1 is not "fall" (present tense), but "fallen" (past tense). Prophet Isaiah describes this *"fall"* in Isaiah 14:12-14: *How are thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For you said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven: I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most-High.*

Satan's fall came through pride. He wanted to be co-equal with God. Jesus, in eternity past, beheld this fall and said to his seventy disciples; *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven* (Luke 10:18). This **fallen one** is presented with a key to the bottomless pit, and he uses it.

V 2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace: and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

The term *bottomless pit* does not refer to one who has a voluminous appetite! Instead, the literal Greek renders it "the pit of the abyss." This term is found 9 times in the New Testament. In each case, it is to restrain or hold certain beings which have come under the judgement of God. For example: When Jesus went into the country of Gadarenes, He met a certain man who had a legion of demons. The demons within the man besought the Lord *that He would not command them to go out into the deep* [or abyss] (Luke 8:31). Now if the demons pleaded with Jesus not to send them into the abyss, it must be a horrible place! Their dread and terror of the pit (or abyss) was so great that they would rather become incarnated in swine. Yes! The abyss must be a terrible place, and anyone who rejects the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, will end up there!

How frightful then is the hour, when the prison house of fallen angels is finally opened.

Remember, that one third of all the angels were also involved in the revolt in heaven led by Lucifer. They were cast into the second level of Hell, unto this appointed time, when they are to be released for perform destruction on the earth. Only Lucifer was allowed to roam freely, until his appointed time comes for him to be thrown into the abyss for eternity.

V 3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

These are not literal locusts. Their power is too great. They are most likely fallen angels, who have been restrained and imprisoned in the bottomless pit since their fall (described in Genesis 6). These wicked beings, chained in darkness all-of these centuries (2 Peter 2:4), can hardly wait to begin their acts of evil. They are given limits by God, the things that they can do ~ and the things that they must not do.

V 4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men who do not have the seal of God in their foreheads.

In chapter 7, we saw multitudes sealed. The locusts, or fallen angels, are not allowed to touch the sealed ones, only the unsealed ones, ~ those who have worshipped the beast, and accepted his number 666. Note also, that the locusts are not allowed to kill the unsealed (the unsaved). They are only permitted to torture them.

V 5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented for five months; and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he strikes a man.

Imagine being continually stung by a scorpion for 5 months ~ you want to die ~ but you cannot!

V 6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, but death shall flee from him.

The next four verses give us a clear description of these locusts, or fallen angels.

V 7. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle [this speaks of strength and speed]; and on their heads as it were crowns of gold [this speaks of royalty; a picture of conquerors], and their faces were as the faces of men, [denoting intelligence].

V 8. And they had hair as the hair of women [picturing attractiveness], and their teeth as the teeth of lions [portraying cruelty].

V 9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron [picturing invincibility]; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle [denoting calamity].

V 10. And they had tails as unto scorpions; and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt people for five months.

These facts now reinforce the gruesome portrait of life upon the earth as the pit of the abyss is opened and the imprisoned angels (who have been imprisoned from before creation began) are now released. The next verse clearly identifies who is the leader of these "fallen angels".

Q 11. And they had a king over them, which is "the angel of the bottomless pit", whose name in Hebrew in Abaddon, but in Greek is Apollyon.

This king is named in both the Hebrew and Greek languages of the Bible. *Abaddon* is Hebrew. This term is found <u>only once in the English Bible</u>, but is found **<u>six times</u>** in the Hebrew Bible. [Job 26:6, 28;22; Psalm 88:1; Proverbs 15:11, and 27:20.] (So, for all those people who say there are no mistakes in the King James Bible, here are 6 of them). The Greek form of the word, *Apollyon* ~means "the destroyer" ~ a word that certainly identifies Satan; the one who comes to "deceive, rob, kill, and destroy".

V 12. One woe is past; and, behold, there comes two woes more hereafter.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET

V 13. And the sixth angel sounded, and heard a voice from the four horns of the golden alter, which is before God;

V 14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great River Euphrates.

As the sixth angel blasts on her trumpet, John hears a voice coming from the four horns of the golden altar, which stands before the throne, in the presence of God. Isn't it strange that many of the judgements are directly linked to God's plan of repentance and atonement?

Perhaps this is because so many of God's messages about God's altar, which speaks of the shed blood of Jesus Christ has been rejected by Israel and the world.

Apostle Paul warned the human race of refusing this teaching. *He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the spirit of grace? (Hebrews 10:28-29).*

The rejection of God's word ALWAYS brings serious consequences. Before us is a scene wherein even the altar (the only place where sin can be forgiven) and the horns of the altar (actually sprinkled with the blood) unitedly cry out to God for judgement. Never treat the message of the precious shed blood of Jesus Christ lightly; because those who do, will be sorry!

Because mankind had rejected the message, the voice from the altar tells the sixth angel to lose the four angels, which are bound in the great Euphrates River. The fact that they are bound clearly indicates that they are "fallen angels", who rebelled against God and fell with Lucifer at the time of his attempted coup de etat in heaven (Isaiah 14:12-14).

Once the church is safely in heaven, four denizens from the pit of the abyss are released upon the earth. Earlier we saw four angels loyal to God holding back the judgement of God (Rev. 7:1). Now four wicked angels are released and set free to wreak havoc upon the earth. They are commanded to execute their judgement on the area of the Euphrates River. This river runs through Iraq and Syria and will become the point of origin for **"the battle of the ages"** in the future.

Although I was in the vicinity of the Gulf War in 1991, it was not the fulfilment of this prophecy, but simply "the beginning of the end", as God Almighty lines up the dominoes for the final the end-time battles in the future. This is the part of the world where Satan performed his destruction against our first parents (Adam & Eve), the location of the Garden of Eden. (Gen. 2:10-14). It is also where Cain murdered his brother Abel (Gen. 4:8): and where mankind made its first united move against God (Gen. 11:1-4). Later in this same area, God made His unconditional covenant with Abraham saying: *Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the River of Egypt, unto the great river, the Euphrates River.* (Gen. 15:18). [These are two of the "biblical boundaries" of the nation of Israel[9].]

This land area belongs to Israel and no-one but Israel! God will see to it that they get it back, just like He has promised. Proof! *And I will set thy bounds (boundaries) from the Red Sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into thy hands: and thou shall drive them out before thee.* [Exodus 23:31]. *And every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the Euphrates River, even unto the uttermost sea shall be your coast*. (Deuteronomy 11:24). And again, God says: *From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the Euphrates River, and the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea towards the going down of the sun (west), shall be your coast.* (Joshua 1:4)

At one point in history, the Euphrates became the boundary of the old Roman Empire ~ which according to prophesy is being restored and will fall under the rule of the Antichrist (Rev. 13:1). This area will become a "spiritual battle ground" as history progresses, for it is serves as both the frontier of the Promised Land, and also the boundary of the "ten-toed", "ten-horned", western federation of nations that produces the Antichrist (Daniel 2:40-41; 7:23-24; Rev. 13:1). The destruction that is to be released upon the earth is described in the next verse.

[9] See Appendix 1

V 15. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of man. [Referring to the Hebrew calendar, which is 360 days, we have 360 +30+1+ 1 hour. = 391 days=1 hour.]

The population as at December 2021 is 7.9 billion people. So far in our study we have seen one quarter of this population die under the rider of the fourth horse (the pale horse) in Rev. 6:8. which means that 2 billion die leaving 5,999,999,999.25 people alive when these four black angels are released to bring destruction upon the earth and destroy another one third of the remaining population, which is approximately another 2 billion people, leaving about 4 billion people on the earth at this time. [Of course, this figure is not accurate, because we do not know the number of people who have been taken up into heaven in the rapture].

These four executioners have been eagerly waiting in the wings to begin the drama of the ages. They are prepared and are eagerly awaiting their scheduled timetable. Remember, the Euphrates River is in the Middle East territory ~ the location of present-day Iraq and Syria. This the world's present and future tinderbox.

The holocaust will also include the Russian and her allies posed against Israel (Ezekiel chapters 38-39). The barbaric troops come against the nation of Israel from the north. *You shall come from thy place out of the north parts, you, and many with thee, all-of them riding on horses, a great company, and a mighty army: and you shall come up against my people of Israel; as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be "in the latter days", and I will bring thee against my land* (Ezekiel 38:15-16). Russia is north of Israel. This is why Joel declared in Joel 2:20, *I will remove far off from you [Israel] the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate [Siberia], with his face towards the east sea, and his hinder part towards the utmost sea.* Geographically, Russia alone meets the qualifications of this text.

As stated previously, Israel is mentioned as the battlefield of the world 18 times in Ezekiel chapter 38 & 39. There is no doubt that the Holy Land becomes the site of the greatest war in the annals of human history. Now Russia marches towards the middle of the tribulation hour, but is driven back to Siberia (Ezekiel 39:1-2 & Joel 2:20). She then strengthens her forces and returns to the land of Israel once more. The scope and intensity of this offensive continues to increase until all-of the nations of the earth become involved and are finally gathered against Israel at Jerusalem. God says: *I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle* (Zechariah 14:2). At this point, the "Battle of Armageddon" takes place: *He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.* (Rev. 16:16). This Middle East war numbers the largest armies in the history of mankind.

V 16. And the number of the army of the horsemen [was] two hundred thousand, thousand, [200 million]: and I heard the number of them.

Think of it! 200 million soldiers! No wonder the ancient prophet said; *And they shall come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land* (Ezekiel 38:16). This army advances in the latest and best equipment. *For the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation ~ the chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against the other in the broadways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings* (Nahum 2:3-4).

Many Bible scholars associate the army of 200 million with Red China and her oriental allies, by tying the text above with the Euphrates River, together with Rev. 16:12, which says: *and the sixth angel poured our his vial upon the great River Euphrates; and the water thereof dried up, that the way of the kings of the east [or the kings of the sun rising] might be prepared.*

Such an assembly of military might be quite feasible, considering the present population of China is approximately 1.2 billion people.

However, other Bible commentators believe this army to be a supernatural one, in light of the three verses which follow;

V 17. And this I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them., having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and of brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions: and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

V 18. By these three was the third part of men killed: by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

V 19. For their power is in their mouth: and in their tails; for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

The advocates of literalism believe that these same verses portray the latest military inventions stockpiled in the military arsenals of the world. Either way, it will be a devastating period of time, as the remaining one third of the world's population are destroyed by fire, smoke, and brimstone ~ a sulphurous, poisonous gas.

At this point, several verses predicting the final war of fire should be investigated and considered: *AS fire goes before him (Psalm 97:3). For behold, the Lord will come with fire. (Isaiah 66:15). The whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealously (Zephaniah 1:18). A fire devours before them. (Joel 2:3).* Who was devoured? The Russian army coming from the north. Ezekiel chapter 39 states that only one sixth of his army survives. Then God states: *I will remove far off from you [Israel] the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face towards the east sea, and his hinder parts towards the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he has done great [terrible] things (Joel 2:20).* This is the point at which the Soviets are pushed back into Siberia. Joel continues in Joel 2:30: *And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and the pillars of smoke.* This sound very similar to the report mentioned in Malachi 4:1: *For behold the day comes, that shall burn as an oven. And the third part of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burn up. (Rev. 8:7).* Again, ~ whether the means of destruction are natural or supernatural ~ it will still be catastrophic! I personally believe that both natural & supernatural forces (men and demons) will be involved in the tribulation woes. There is still 65% of the population still remaining, so what happens to them?

V 20. And the rest of the men who were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.

V 21. Neither they repented of their murders, nor their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

We have now witnessed the release of thirteen judgements ~ made up of seven seals & six trumpets. One would think that after experiencing such devastation, mankind would start to believe that there is a God and also start to consider their eternal destination. But not so! Those who are still alive have hardened their hearts and continue to rebel against God. Wicked sinners do not give up or give in easily. In fact, God's word tells us that these men won't repent even after they have been in the regions of the doomed and the damned for centuries. Even then, they continue gnashing their teeth in an expression of their hatred towards God. *The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend (Him), and them which (continue to) do iniquity: And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be a wailing and gnashing of teeth* (Matthew 13:41-42). Verses 20 & 21 identify five major sins which permeate the Tribulation scene:

(1) Occultism;
(2) Murder (becomes a sport);
(3) Drug Abuse;
(4) Fornication (sexual orgies);
(5) Stealing.

Let us examine these in more detail.

OCCULTISM

The Tribulation will be a time of pronounced devil worship! Anton LaVey began the church of Satan worship in San Francisco. Estimates reveal that tens of thousands of people in California

alone are connected to this or some other form of occult organization. Stores where satanic objects can be purchased are presently springing up everywhere, both nationally & internationally. God hates this sin!

Listen to what the Almighty says: *Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I AM the LORD your God* (Leviticus 19:31). *And the soul that turns after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from his people* (Leviticus 20:6). Anything that smells of demonic-related practises has the *anathema* to God upon it. Look at the list found in Deuteronomy 18:10-12: *There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times (astrology), or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer* (a person who speaks to the spirits of the dead). *For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.*

In addition to worshipping devils, earth dwellers of the Tribulation Hour also use idols made of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood. **God hates Idolatry!** This practise breaks His holy Law ~ the second commandment ~ given to Moses in Exodus 20:4-5; which declares: *Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image … Thou shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord, thy God am a jealous God.*

There are those today, who knowingly, or unknowingly, break God's commandments by worshipping lifeless, man-made idols. **Their worship, however, is meaningless to God!** In Psalm 115:4-8 it says: *Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands; They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; They have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak through their throat. They that make them are like unto them [helpless & hopeless]; so is everyone that trusts in them.* **God condemns idolatry ~ past, present & future!**

During the Tribulation hour, the world ~ steeped in occultism and idolatry ~ progresses to the worship of the image of beast, or Antichrist, who proclaims himself as God 2 Thessalonians 2:4). This image, made in his likeness (Rev. 13:15), is undoubtedly the *abomination of desolation* referred to in Matthew 24:15, which is placed in the Temple in Jerusalem; and which brings great heartache to the Jews of that day. Here in Toowoomba the Satanists have advertised on social media that "Witches' Rights are Human Rights". This present surge in occultism is paving the way for the coming of the greatest religious imposter in history.

MURDER

During this same period, murder becomes a sport, and judgement does not change the situation. The wicked "refuse to turn from their wicked ways" and their brutalistic manner of living. They find pleasure in killing people, perhaps terrorism is rampant across the nations. Jesus said: *But as in the days of Noah, so shall the coming of the Son of man be* (Matthew 24:37). Noah's day was characterised by violence: *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth is filled with violence.* (Genesis 6:11). Our 21st century is certainly leading us to this terrifying hour.

DRUGS, FORNICATIONS & STEALING

The final three sins that are prevalent during the end time are all interrelated and have to do with sorceries ~ drug abuse, fornication (the practise of every conceivable sex sin), and theft. These sins indicate that bodies are being sold (through prostitution) and burglaries are being committed to support their drug habit. Present daily news headlines indicate that that day is already upon us. We must prepare ~ for the time for the church to remain on this earth is being shortened everyday. *We must prepare to meet our God.* (Amos 4:12). We must fully understand the significance of Drugs and Drug use in the End times.

Drugs & Drug Addiction

There are a number of words used in the Bible to describe the subject of sorcery. There are 27 different references to sorcery, sorceries, witches, witchcraft, and the art of bewitching. Of these, at least five in the New Testament are especially pertinent and need out attention, for they have a relevant and direct bearing on the present days scenarios in which we live ~ the present day of drugs and drug addiction.

In the Old Testament and in the Book of Acts the term *sorcery* always means *"witchcraft"* or "*magic"* and the practise is always continually and constantly condemned. God does not change His mind; God hates it and He even makes it clear that those practicing these types of characteristics will not be allowed to enter heaven WITHOUT REPENTANCE!

Five times the word *"sorcery"* is used in the New Testament and relates to drug addiction. In each of these times the Greek word used is *pharmakeia* ~ from which we get the English word *pharmacy* or in the USA ~ "Drug store". The literal meaning of this Greek word is *"enchantment with drugs"* or "to get high", or "to get a kick out of drugs".

However, prescription medications from your local doctor are not included in this condemnation. This means that the literal translation of Rev. 9:21 *is that men repent not of their enchantment with drugs during the Tribulation Hour.* Therefore, each of the five references must be carefully considered in light of its context. Collectively, they reveal the following:

(1) The present world condition, as foretold in the prophetic scriptures handcome to pass;
(2) The inevitable result of drug addiction;
(3) The certain and definite judgment upon the drug pusher as well;
(4) The drug victim, and finally,
(5) The appraisal of this terrible sin in the sight of God Almighty.

As already stated, we can already see the clear signs of this happening around us, with the spread of drugs into all levels of society across the nations. Such a widespread use of drugs cannot help but bring destruction down upon itself. Even considering all-of the mind-expansion trips and propaganda, not one user has been able to do more, or become more efficient, than he was before experimenting with drugs. This steady downward spiral will be climaxed at the close of the Great Tribulation, when the full cup of its own judgement is measured out.

The closing chapters of the Book of Revelation graphically portray the terrible consequences of mankind's enchantment with drugs. What we are presently witnessing is only the beginning of the coming disintegration of our society during the Tribulation Period. Rev. 18:23 says: *For by they sorceries were all nations deceived.* As already mentioned, the Greek word is *Pharmakeia.* Thus, "by their enchantment with drugs", or "getting high on drugs", were all the nations deceived. See how easy it was for governments around the world to deceive people into having their COVID vaccinations, which evidence later showed did not stop you catching COVID. The event mentioned above, is a similar situation, and is a result of mankind's second mass usage of drugs.

There is a change in the next reference of the word translated as *sorcerers*. This change relates to "a class of people", who are doomed, and is found in Rev. 21:8: *But the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and* ***sorcerers****, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.* The Greek word for sorcerers in this text is ***pharmakeus.*** *Whereas the word previously used, (pharmakeia) meant "enchantment with drugs", (pharmakeus)* means "the enchanter with drugs" ~ the pusher, the trafficker or seller of drugs. **This text plainly declares that 8 distinct groups of people will never get into heaven, but will be assigned to the lake of fire;** (A literal description of Hell.) One of these groups identified as those who are enchanters, or pushers of drugs. What a solemn warning about having anything to do with this soul-damning drug traffic of the present hour! But wait! There is another more serious reference to sorcerers in Revelation 22:15. *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loves to make a lie.* Here again, the word used is

pharmakeus. Although the same Greek word is used here, it has a deeper meaning in this context. By extension, it includes **both the pusher and the user!** Please note! These people are kept out of heaven **UNLESS THEY REPENT!** (Heaven would not be heaven for very long if there were allowed to be admitted). There is only one place that they can go; the place of eternal separation from God; the place prepared for Satan and His angels ~ Hell. (Matthew 25:41). This place was never intended to be for people, but because they chose to rebel against God and His word, they make the choice to be absent from God for eternity.

The Bible is explicit in stating that there is no heaven for those who refuse to repent of their sins. In hell, they will keep on sinning forever! They never repent, or get saved there. Notice that of the six groups identified in Rev. 22:15, sorcerers (drug pushers & users) occupy second place ~ second priority, immediately following the term which describes "outlaws" as wild dogs. God really hates this sin!

The word *witchcraft* which is found in Galatians 5:19-21, has the same meaning; *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; (1) Adultery, (2) fornication, (3) uncleanness, (4) lasciviousness , (5) Idolatry, (6) witchcraft, (7) hatred, (8) variance, (9) emulations, (10) wrath, (11) strife, (12) seditions, (13) heresies; (14) envyings, (15) murderers, (16) drunkenness, (17) revellings, and such like: of these which I tell you before, as I have already told you in times past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* The drug user and the drug pusher are both excluded from heaven!

Is there no hope or escape from the clutches of this binding habit? Yes! Praise God there is! There is a source of liberation ~ it is the Lord Jesus Christ: *For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.* (1 John 3:8). It is by way of the cross of Calvary that Jesus Christ has broken Satan's grip. Now, when ***any guilty sinner*** calls upon the name of Jesus Christ for salvation, Jesus Christ immediately frees him from the shackles of sin and death which bind Him. Jesus says what He means and means what He says. Try Him. There is no limit to the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TEN: THE SECOND TIME OUT.

In chapter 10, we have the second time out, like in chapter 7. Between the sixth and the seventh seal judgements, these was a time out before the storm. Now in chapter 10 we experience the second time out between the sixth and the seventh trump blasts. This time out continues through until chapter 11, verse 14.

V 1. And I saw another mighty angel come forth from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon His head and His face was as it were the sun, and His feet as pillars of fire.

This "Angel" is Jesus Christ! Remember, Christ was, and is, eternal. In fact, He existed before the angels, because He created them. *For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.* (Colossians 1:16). Therefore, I believe that these Theophanies and Christophanies were appearances of Christ throughout the Old Testament, usually in the form of manifestations. For example:

(1) When Abraham was about to put the knife into his son on Mount Moriah, the "Angel of the Lord" stopped Him.

(2) When Moses saw the Burning Bush, a voice came out of the bush and He was told to take off his shoes, for the ground upon which he stands is Holy.

This "Angel of Jehovah" has always acted as a deity. Isaiah 63:9 says: *In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity, he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.*

On three occasions, up to this point of time, we have observed this "angelic messenger" in action. In Rev. 7:2-3, He holds back the tide of judgement for a special hour of grace. In Rev. 8:5, He stands as the messenger of the covenant, pouring out the fire of judgement upon the earth.

Now, Jesus appears again in the text before us. In His first appearance, He is a prophet, in His second appearance, He is a priest, and now in His third appearance, He appears as a King.

This is the three-fold ministry of the Saviour.

Hence, without question, this "angel" is Jesus. As He comes down from heaven He is covered with a cloud, and had a rainbow upon His head, exhibits a countenance that shines like the sun, and has feet like unto pillars of fire. What do these attributes signify?

First, Christ, in His deity, is usually surrounded by a cloud: *Cloud and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgement are the habitation of His throne* (Psalm (7:2).

Bickering, complaining, rebellious Israel, witnessed *the glory of the Lord* [appearing] *in the cloud,* (Exodus 16:20) when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments of judgement. He descended in a thick cloud, and immediately *the Lord said unto Moses; Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud … and it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount* (Exodus 19:9,16). At the completion of the Tabernacle, a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34). This was *the cloud of the Lord (Exodus 40:38).* On the Mount of Transfiguration, *a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said: This is my beloved Son, I whom I am well pleased: Hear ye him (Matthew 17:5).* When Christ ascended to heaven*, a cloud received him out of their sight (Acts 1:9).* And as He departed, He said; *they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.* (Luke 21:27). When Jesus returns, *He will come with clouds; and every eye shall see Him* (Rev. 1:7).

Second, the God of all eternity made a covenant with Noah, placing a rainbow in the sky, as a symbol of His mercy. The rainbow pictures mercy in the midst of judgement. No-one but the Lord could wear it!

Third, Christ is often pictured as One who has a shining face as unto the sun. In fact, Saul of Tarsus met the One on the road to Damascus, and he describes him whose countenance was and is light: *And as [Saul] journeyed he came near Damascus: and suddenly, there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him: Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me? And he said: Who are thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I AM Jesus* (Acts 9:3-5).

Finally, Christ's feet, as pillars of fire picture judgement, as we saw in Rev. 1:15.

V 2. And He had in His hand a little book open: and He set His right foot upon the sea, and, His left foot on the earth.

This verse pictures Jesus preparing to take complete control of the earth and the sea, where were always His, because He created them, *for all things were made by him; and without him not anything made was made* (John 1:3).

When Christ came to take control 2,000 years ago, He was rejected, crucified, and buried, but He rose again. Since that time, He has been at the right hand of God the Father, making intercession for His people (Hebrews 7:25). At a given moment, (after the last martyrs blood has been shed) He will rise from the throne and make a request. The picture is presented in Psalm 2:6-8: God says*, Yet, have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree.* Then Jesus says; *The Lord has said unto me; Thou art my Son: this is the day I have begotten thee.* Immediately, the Father asks His Son to make a request, saying; *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* At the granting of this request, the Lord Jesus sets His right foot upon the sea and, His left foot upon the earth, and He unrolls the scroll (book) which contains the record of the judgements He plans to unleash upon the earth.

V 3. And [He] cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars: and when He cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

This is the cry of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, (Hebrews 7:14). Immediately prior to executing the judgements listed in the book, He cries loudly (roars as a lion) to warn of impending danger. Other portions of scripture also indicate that He will roar when He comes as the Judge of the

universe. Hosea 11:10 says: *They shall walk after the Lord: He shall roar like a lion: when He shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.* Joel 3:16 then states: *The Lord shall also roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.* Again Amos 1:2: *The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem.*

When the Lord roars, seven thunders utter their voices. Though thunder is usually associated with judgement, no attempt is made to explain its meaning because the Lord forbids it in the next verse.

V 4. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me; Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

We will have to wait and see what they said ~ but for the present, God has commanded that this section of scripture remains a secret.

V 5. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up His hand to heaven.

V 6. And swear by Him that lives for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things that are therein, that there should be time no longer [or literally, no waiting period].

Here we see our God taking an oath. Though this is forbidden in our dispensation of grace, it was not under the law age of Moses, and will not be during the Tribulation and Kingdom periods. This oath is by the eternal Creator, based upon His creation of heaven, the earth, the sea, and all-of the things contained with them. This oath is that time will be no longer ~ or more accurately, there shall no longer be any more delays. The time has now come for the sounding of the seventh trumpet blast, and nothing can stop it, or hinder its execution. There will be no further waiting ~ no more delays!

V 7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall "begin to sound," the mystery of God should be finished, as he has declared to His servants the prophets.

But, the seventh angel does not blast the trumpet at this point, but it occurs in Rev. 11:15. When he does finally blast it, all-of the warnings of the prophets concerning judgements shall be fulfilled. At that time, *the earth shall be filled with the full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).* When this knowledge floods over the land, the mystery disappears.

The Old Testament prophets could not understand all-of the mysteries surrounding the end-time events. They could not see and understand God's timetable as we can. 1 Peter 1:10-11, describes this situation. *Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when [He] testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.* This glory had to do with the return of Jesus Christ to earth, to establish His millennium kingdom.

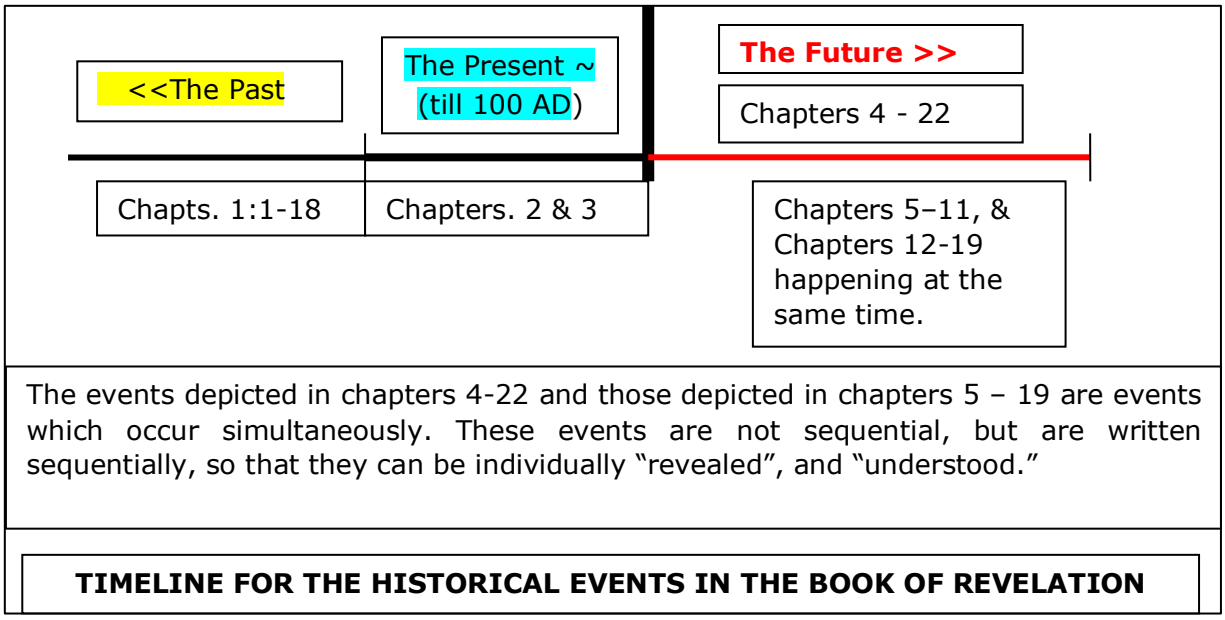
Though the prophets knew that this was going to happen ~ as evidenced by their many predictions, ~ they did not clearly understand, nor foresee the 2,000+ year gap between the time of Christ's rejection on the earth and His establishment of His kingdom on the earth with His bride. Still, their writings reflected the fact that a "suffering Saviour" preceded a ruling King, as is indicated in Psalm 22:14-16. This is Christ, speaking prophet, concerning His suffering and crucifixion: *I am poured out like water, and all-of my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels, My strength is dried up like potsherd; and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and thou have brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have been compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclose me; they pierced my hands and my feet.*

Again, Isaiah mentions a cross preceding the crown in Isaiah 53:4-6. *Surely, He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him, stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

But He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

The centuries have now passed, and in our study, we are now present when the mighty mystery of God is finished, and is about to be revealed. The final dominoes are in place and everything is now in its appointed place. The prophetic time clock has stuck midnight, or the "zero hour". Unlike in the children's story, the world does not change into a pumpkin when the clock strikes midnight, but greater events than this are about to happen. There will be no further delays. The final trumpet is poised ready to sound, and the Tribulation Hour is about to come to an end. Now, there bursts forth great rejoicing in heaven, as the heavenly hosts proclaim the great news: *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.* (Rev. 11:15).

Some people may find it difficult to understand why the Tribulation Hour ends in Rev. 11:15, especially when seven more bowl (vial) judgements occur in chapters 18 & 19, and Jesus does not return to earth until Rev. 19:11-16. May I remind you of the diagram in chapter 1. Chapters 12 through 19:15 run concurrently with the judgements already discussed. They are a repeat of chapters 6 through 11. Actually, the simplistic outline of the Book of Revelation has been mentioned as in chapter 1, verses 1-19 ~ the past! The present is described in chapters 2 & 3; the future is chapters 4 through 22; with chapters 5 through 11, happening simultaneously with chapter 12 through 19.



V 8. And the voice which I heard from heaven spoke unto me again and said; Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which stands upon the sea and upon the earth.

At this point, John is told to take the book out of the hand of Christ, who stand upon the sea and upon the earth. This he does.

V 9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto Him, Give me the little book. And He said unto me; Take it, and eat it up: and it shall make they belly bitter, but it shall be in they mouth sweet as honey.

This little book that John is commanded to take is either; all, or portion of the Word of God dealing with the judgements. John obeys.

V 10. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter.

This verse pictures a devouring of God's word ~ assimilating it through study and personal application. At times it is both sweet and bitter. The Prophet Jeremiah stated: *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.* (Jeremiah 15:16). The psalmist also declared in Psalm 119:103; *How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth.* Now John, following the angel's instructions, now also finds that the Word of God is as sweet as honey. This is because he can see the light at the end of the tunnel. As he reads the prophecies, he envisions the establish kingdom, The Bride sitting beside the Bridegroom, and peace and prosperity prevalent in the land, with Satan bound and sin abolished. What sweetness! What Blessing! Yet, as John that there are still more judgements to be released, the Word becomes bitterness in his digestive tract.

How true for us today! How precious is the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ? The revelation that Jesus loves sinners. He shed his blood for the remissions of sins. By trusting in Jesus Christ, one can obtain eternal life; *Yes, he that believes on the Son of Man has everlasting life.* (John 3:36), However, this message becomes a bitter pill to swallow when one realises that those who reject the gospel message and the free gift of eternal life offered by Jesus Christ, will face judgement; *for he that believes not the gospel message shall be damned.* (Mark 16:16). Make you decision today! *as for me and my house, we choose to serve the Lord!* (Joshua 24:15). Believe and be saved!!! It's available to all! F*or whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved* (Romans 10:13). This bittersweet message is now about to be propagated by John.

V 11. And he said unto me; You must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations and tongues, and kings.

As we will discover in the remaining chapters, John actually does this. He is faithful unto the end, proclaiming both the good news and the bad news, (presenting both the sweet and the bitter). He warns of the remaining judgement which are to come, the seven bowls (or vials), the Great White Throne Judgement, and the dissolution of the present heavens and earth. May we be found as faithful in proclaiming all-of God's Holy Word (ALL-OF IT ~ NOT JUST SOME OF IT). For God commands that we preach the Word: *Be instant is season, out of season; Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.* (2 Timothy 4:2).

CHAPTER ELEVEN: ISRAEL'S SPIRIT LIFE EXAMINED.

Chapter 11 deals with the Spiritual life of Israel and chapter 12 deals with their persecution. Since people think that you need a place to communicate with God, we see that a Temple has been erected.

V 1. A there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the Temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

The measuring reed like a rod is most likely from the banks of the Jordan Valley and is probably about ten feet in length. (More detail is in Ezekiel from chapter 39 onwards, where Ezekiel is also told to measure out the temple.)

Through the angel, John is told to measure the Temple of God and its altar, as well as the people of Israel (concerning their spirituality). The first Temple[10] ever built was called Solomon's Temple, and is discussed in details in 1 Chronicles chapters 22,28-29; and 2 Chronicles chapters 2-7.

This Temple was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in approximately 590 B.C. after a 2-year siege. It was rebuilt seventy years later under King Zerubbabel and Joshua.

This second Temple was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes, a Greco-Syrian ruler. He stuck a pig in the Temple ~ an act which prefigured the desecration to occur under the Antichrist as he sets up *the abomination of desolation in the Tribulation Temple* (Matthew 24:15).

[10] In 2019, they discovered the Temple believed to have been constructed by Melchizedek (when Jerusalem was still called Salem), and it is now officially called Temple Zero.

Now in this chapter we find that a Third Temple had been erected. (Already the altar for it has been constructed outside the city walls of Jerusalem, and consecrated, dedicated and in use every Passover since 2018. It is probably not the Final Millennium Temple referred to in Ezekiel chapters 40-48, (which is very detailed), but possibly one which is built during the Tribulation Hour and used sacrilegiously by the beast, who claims to be God (2 Thessalonians 2:4). This temple, its altar and all-of the attendants are Jewish. There is no outer court for Gentiles, as there was in past Temples.

V 2. But the court which is without the Temple leave out, and measure it not: for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months.

Please note that this temple has nothing to do with the HIS CHURCH, which is no longer on the earth, but is in Heaven for the Wedding ceremony (Rev. 4:1). It is specifically for the Jews; NOT Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God!

In the Second Temple, rebuilt and enlarged by Herod the great in 20 or 21 B.C., the outer court was marked off from the inner court; where only Jews were allowed to enter. The two courts were separated by the *middle wall of partition* (Ephesians 2:14), and no Gentile was allowed beyond that point. This is why the Jews got so angry when Apostle Paul broke this rule, and these angry Jews wanted to kill him; *Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teaches all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further brought Greeks (Gentiles) also into the Temple (the Inner Court), and has polluted this place* (Acts 21:28).

So, as John is measuring the Tribulation Temple, he is told to omit the outer court, undoubtedly because the Gentiles will trample the Holy City (Jerusalem) under their feet for 42 months.

There is no doubt about the literalness of this 7-year period. Daniel's first 69 weeks (Daniel 9:24-26) totalled 483 years, and was completed on the exact day that Jesus rode his donkey into Jerusalem on Psalm Sunday. Remember we discussed the term *week* in Rev. chapter 6, and the Hebrew term is *Shabua (or Shabuim)* which actually means "seven years". Thus, 69 years multiplied by 7 = 483 years to the exact day. If this be so, then it is logical (and Biblical) for Daniel's 70th week to also be *Shabuim, that is 7 years, or as per the Old Hebrew Calendar = 2,520 days. The formula is so clear that even children can grasp it! One half of 2,520 is 1,260 days ~or forty-two months, of 30 days each, that is 3.5 years.*

Remember, the Old Jewish Calendar contained 12 months, each of 30 days. So, 7 years is 84 months. The Tribulation period is made up of 84 months, split into 2 groups of 42 months each, with punishment ever increasing. Is this scriptural? Then let us check it and confirm if from scripture.

***Firstly**, in chapter 11, verse 3, chapter 12, verse 6 as 1,260 days. Also, the months are mentioned in chapter 11, verse 2, and chapter 13, verse 5, as forty-two (months). Again, we can see 1,260 multiplied by 2 = 2,520 days, and the 42 multiplied by 2 = 84 months = or one Shabua ~ seven years.*

One does not have to be a mathematical wizard to see that the Tribulation Hour is a full seven years in duration. Take it literally! ***During the final half of the seven-year period, two witnesses appear!***

V 3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth.

So firstly, they are God's witnesses, and they shall prophesy on the earth for 1260 days (or 42 months, or 3.5 years). These two witnesses are God's Prophets, sent to proclaim His message of Doom. They are clothed in sackcloth.

In the Bible, sackcloth and ashes always represents REPENTANCE and REPENTANCE IS DEMANDED WHEN SIN STALKS A NATION. Repentance is God's call to either TURN or BURN! These two witnesses are described in the next two verses.

V 4. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the Earth.

Olive trees exude oil. Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit; Candlesticks are light bearers. Thus, we have the beautiful picture of two chosen witnesses, anointed by the power of the Holy Spirit, proclaiming the message of light in the midst of a sin-blackened world. There is no other way to do God's service. Oh! *Be filled with the Spirit* (Ephesians 5:18)

There is a lot of "guessing" and discussion about who the identity if these two witnesses are: Some Bible scholars say that they are Elijah (Elias) & Moses (because they were seen by the disciples on Mount Transfiguration with Jesus); whilst other say that it will be Enoch & Elijah, as these two people were taken into heaven alive.

Malachi is explicit in predicting Elijah's future appearance on earth. He states: *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in: behold, he shall come, says the Lord of Hosts. Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord* (Malachi 3:1; & 4:5). Therefore, there is no argument that Elijah is one of these two witnesses.

This prediction by Malachi is corroborated by the fact as stated above that both Elijah and Enoch did not die a physical death and were both taken up into heaven in a whirlwind and a chariot of fire. (2 Kings 2:9-11), (Genesis 5:24) and (Hebrews 11:5). Enoch prophesied the coming day of God's judgement and the return of Christ with His church (Jude 14, 15).

Since Enoch's earthly ministry was before the establishment of the Jewish race, he is considered God's first prophet to the Gentiles. Elijah is God's prophet to the Gentiles. Since God's witness and message is to both the Gentiles and the Jews during the Tribulation Hour many scholars believe the two witnesses will by Enoch and Elijah.

However, another group believe it will by Moses and Elijah, both seen on Mt. Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8) ~ a preview of the glory to come in that day when the Lord Jesus Christ will be the only important one. This preview indicates that, when the day finally comes, Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets, will be present ~ as the two witnesses.

Concerning Moses: *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him shall you hearken … and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him* (Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19). One should keep in mind that the body of Moses was preserved by God. Jude verse 9 declares: *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee!*

These two witnesses, dressed in sackcloth and proclaiming the message of judgement will be hated by all those still left on the earth. Latter-day terrorists will attempt to destroy them. God however forbids it and offers sovereign protection until their work is finished.

But personally, I don't want to be on the earth to find out who these two witnesses are; I want to be in heaven, as part of The Bride, watching what is taking place on the earth.

V 5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouths, and devours their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

This can be nothing but supernatural power and intervention. The fact that these two witnesses have super-human anointing is evident in the next verse.

V 6. These have power to shut heaven that it rain not, in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth.

One of these two witnesses, Elijah (or Elias) performed this very miracle in earlier days: *Elias prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth for a space of 3.5 years,*

(1,260 days). And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit. (James 5:17-18).

Moses, the second witness, had power (along with Aaron his brother) to turn the waters into blood and to smite the earth with various plagues (Exodus chapters 7-10). Thus, the Tribulation ministry of these two supernaturally anointed prophets is a repeat of their previous ministries upon the earth. During the period of time, they cannot be killed: it must occur at God's appointed time.

V 7. And when they shall have finished their testimony (after 1260 days) the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

Isn't it wonderful and comforting to know that nothing can happen to a child of God without the Lord's divine permission? "What have I to dread, what have I to fear; leaning on the everlasting arms?" No-one can take a believer's life, without the permissive will of God. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* (Job 7:1). *It is appointed unto men once to die* (Hebrews 9:27). This is why Christians should always say: *If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that. (James 4:15).* At this time, the witnesses' testimony ends. God's purpose for these two witnesses has been completed. Soon they shall be called home. The method of their release from the body is death at the hands of the beast. His conduct is identical to that of the deceased Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, who had the bodies of American service personnel displayed in the streets of Tehran following the April 1980 hostage rescue attempt. His action was one of the most repulsive, repugnant sights ever witnessed. The Antichrist commits this same dastardly deed with the bodies of Moses and Elijah.

V 8. And their dead bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom & Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

Since the Lord was crucified in the city, we know it is Jerusalem. The term "great city" is the Holy City (Jerusalem) already referred to in verse two. Why then is it called Sodom & Egypt? Sodom: because of the moral and spiritual condition in Sodom before its destruction, and the idolatrous iniquities that abounded in Egypt before God judged the land, are found inundating Jerusalem during this period. Sadly, all-of the preaching of repentance by the two witnesses in sackcloth did not change the wicked complexion of the city. The death of the two witnesses is observed by the whole world, as evidenced in the next verse.

V 9. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

Satellite television, beaming the identical images to every nation on earth, and into every home equipped with a receiver, allows the spectacle to be observed internationally. The action constitutes a victory celebration by the Antichrist, similar to Khomeini's televised production. In response, the world rejoices. The two "gloom and doom" preachers are gone! No longer will two hell-fire advocates spoil their tea parties. No longer will their beer and salami festivals be hindered. The two witnesses are dead!

V 10. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts to one another: because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

But wait! ~ there's more! The party is coming to an end! Their food will soon stick in their throats. A miracle of spectacular proportions is about the happen.

V 11. And after three days and a half the Spirit of Life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

V 12. And they heard a Great voice from heaven saying unto them; Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

Elijah and Moses receive the same treatment as the raptured saints in Rev. 4:1. Hallelujah! They depart in glory, in a twinkling of an eye. As this awe-inspiring sight is being observed, God sends

judgement for all sacrilegious acts the violent, drug-crazed crowds perpetrated on these two servants.

V 13. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and a tenth part of the city fell. And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant was affrighted, and gave glory to the God of Heaven.

This was a bigger televised spectacular! Two men came to life again and then vanished into a cloud. No-one prayed for them, no-one laid hands on them, ~ it just happened & then they heard the Great voice from heaven. Next comes a giant earthquake which hits the city without warning and 7,000 men or renowned, (the big names in town), are killed. This video extravaganza makes the nightly news seem like a kid's story. At this point, if you did not believe there was a God, then maybe you were considering changing your mind.

Those who live through this experience become exceedingly frightened and begin to praise God. Sadly however, it is not from converted hearts that they exalt Him. Instead, their praise is the result of astonishment and alarm. This event has really got their attention! Their reaction is similar to the Scribes and Pharisees who witnessed the miracle of the healed paralytic and were all amazed, and glorified God, and were filled with fear (Luke 5:26). They did not get saved, just scared! Some people develop spiritual language in a hurry!

Wait until atomic bombs begin flying and exploding all around you and prayer and praise will become the order of the day.

We now come to the third woe! Remember the angel in Rev. 8:13 cried out: "Woe, woe, woe?" Each of these "WOES" depicted a different judgement. Each in turn, becomes more severe. The first woe was the fifth trumpet blast; the second woe was the sixth trumpet blast. At this final woe, or seventh trumpet is about to sound.

V 14. The second woe is past; and, behold the third woe comes quickly.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

V 15. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying; The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for forever and ever.

The picture before us is the same as the one in Rev. 19: 11-16, the return of the king. If one remembers that chapters 6 through 11, and 12 through 19:15 run concurrently & simultaneously, during the Tribulation hour, then he will understand why the King returns both in Rev. 11:15, and in Rev. 19:6. Chapters 12 through 19 are but a repeat of the events described in chapters 6 through 11. Now, as the King returns, a praise and worship service begins like never before.

V 16. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God.

This worship is an act of gratitude. Remember that the twenty-four elders represent all believers ~ both from the Old Testament and from the New Testament ~ who have lived on this earth and who have been raptured to heaven in Rev. 4:1. They know first-hand that Satan has been the god of this world system (2 Corinthians 4:4). They understand fully that the nations of this world have been under his control (Matthew 4:8-9). But now, praise God, Satan's reign has finally ended ~ because the King has come! There is great rejoicing in heaven among the raptured saints as the midnight newscast is shared. They unitedly pray …

V 17. Saying; We give the thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and was, and is to come: because you hast taken to thee thy great power, and has reigned.

Their prayer is to Christ, the One who used the title, *which art, and was, and is to come.* The power that was always his has now been embraced, and He has begun His reign. The wicked are upset over the King's return to the earth.

V 18. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged and that thou should give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and should destroy them which destroy the earth.

Notice the number of happenings which occur when King Jesus returns to earth.

First, the nations are angry! This is also described in the other text describing the King's descent to earth. *And I saw the beast, and the king of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him who sat on the horse, and against his army (*Rev. 19:19).

Second, the day of God's wrath has come as the king returns. This is the period of time when *out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.* (Rev. 19:15).

Third, at the conclusion of the King's 1,000-year reign, the wicked are judged. The setting is (Rev. 20:11-15).

Fourth, the faithful prophets and saints, both small and great, are rewarded at the end of the 1,000 years. This is not a picture of the Judgement Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). Then, believers were raptured (Rev. 4:1), and investigated (Rev. 4:2), coronated (Rev. 4:4), and exalted, as they lay their crowns at the feet of Jesus. (Rev. 4:10), long before the Tribulation Hour ended. The rewards presented at this time are for those who are faithful during the kingdom age ~ those who did not rebel and follow Satan, who was released for a short period at the end of the 1,000 years (Rev. 20: 7-8).

Fifth, those who destroyed the earth are destroyed. This refers to "spirit-beings" who followed the destroyer, Satan. Their destruction is separate from that of the nations, hence the division between the two in verse 18 above.

Satanic beings receive their judgement at this hour as well as the earth dwellers. in-the-midst-of all-of this, Israel is spared.

V 19. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple that ark of his testament: and there was lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

The Temple of God and the Ark of the Testament, both connected with Jewish worship, picture Israel. Thus, in the midst of lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail, God spares his covenant people.

CHAPTER TWELVE: THE FIRST WOMAN APPEARS

As noted previously, chapters 12 through 19 constitute a re-run the Tribulation Hour, as presented in chapters 6 through 11. So, in Chapter 12, we start in the middle of the Tribulation Hour, 1260 days after it started and to the worst wave of antisemitism the world has ever observed. This is truly what Jeremiah had in mind in Jeremiah 30:7 when he said: *Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble. Jacob, as one discovers in Romans 11:26, is Israel.*

A number of great signs and occurrences are witnessed by John in this chapter, each having to do with the horrendous judgement that is enveloping the whole earth, including the persecution directed specifically against Israel. These include:

1. *A great wonder (verse 1),*
2. *A great red dragon (verse 3),*
3. *A great wrath (verse 12), and*
4. *Two wings of a great eagle (verse 14).*

V 1. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

In the Book of Revelation there are picture references to four different women; (1) Jezebel, the high priestess of paganism (Rev. 2:20); (2) the scarlet woman, the high priestess of apostasy (Rev. 17); (3) The Lamb's wife, the representative of the true, blood-bought church disciples (Rev. 19:7); and (4) Israel, in the text before us (Rev. 12:1).

This woman of chapter 12 is a picture of Israel. Mary Baker Eddy Glover Patterson claimed to be that woman, but her claim was absurd. The woman's offspring could not possible be the Christian Science Movement. Who then is this woman; and why does she appear? The term *wonder* comes from the same Greek word as *sign*. Thus, this woman is a sign.

The woman in Rev. 12:1 was pictured in a dream of Joseph centuries before: *And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it [to] his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more: and behold the sun and the moon* [representing the father and other] *and the eleven stars* [representing his 11 brothers] *made obeisance to me* [the twelfth star]. *And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him. What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying* (Genesis 37:9-11).

Clearly, the woman clothed with the sun and wearing a crown of 12 stars upon her head, just like in Joseph's dream, is Israel. The birth of this woman's (Israel's) son is predicted in Isaiah 66:7-8. *Before she travailed, she brought forth: before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children [or her son].* Isaiah's prediction finds its fulfilment in the next verse.

V 2. And she, being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

Here we have the mother, Israel, bringing forth a man-child who is none other than the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, as one discovers in Verse 5. This truth lines up with many New Testament texts; For example; Romans 9:4-5 states; [They] *are Israelites; to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.*

Christ in his flesh, came forth from Israel; and, at this point in our text, Christ's long-time adversary, Satan ~ the one who rebelled in heaven centuries before against the authority of God (Isaiah 14:12-14) is about to strike another blow.

V 3. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

V 4. And his tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman; which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

The red dragon is proven to be Satan in verse 9. The number 7 speaks of completeness, and therefore, the dragon's seven heads picture his wisdom. It is written that Satan is *full of wisdom* (Ezekiel 28:12). God created him that way when he was *the anointed cherub [or angel] that covers* (Ezekiel 28:14). His ten horns speak of universal power, just as the ten toes of Daniel's image do. Satan's international control, of course, is possible because millions of demons jump at his command.

Remember, he is *the god of this world system* (2 Corinthians 4:4). He is also *the prince of the power of the air* (Ephesians 2:2) and *the price of this world* (John 12:31). However, since he is not omniscient, (all knowing) or omnipotent (in all places at the same time), Satan rely on demonic hosts (fallen angels) in diversifies places to administer his power. This explains why Christians are not fighting against flesh and blood only, but against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:12). Satan's angels fell with him at the time of his rebellion against God in Heaven. A similar reference is made in Jude verse 13.

The reason this is discussed now, is because the past, present, and future scenes, are all laid out for the whole age-long conflict from the beginning to the end. It is squeezed into few verses. The

same devil, who attempted to destroy the woman's (or Israel's) son many centuries before (Genesis 3:15) is now about to strike out against the woman herself, via the greatest anti-Semitic purge in history. Hitler's murderous and barbaric attempts at annihilation of the Jews will seem like a Sunday school picnic compared to the holocaust before us. That is why Daniel stated: *There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that timothy people shall be delivered; every one that shall be found written in the book* (Rev. 12:1). Jesus, Himself said in Matthew 24:12-22, *For then shall there be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor shall ever be (again). And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened.* The "elect", as spoken here, are the Israelites of Romans 11:28). Now in verse 5 this age-long conflict of past, present & future, are confirmed.

V 5. And she brought forth a man-child [2,000 years ago], who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron [future]: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne [the present age of grace].

V 6. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where: she has a place prepared of God that they should feed her there for 1260 days.

During his final 42-month period (1260 days), described as the Great Tribulation (Rev. 7:14), because of its intensity and immensity, the Children of Israel are protected by their God. He took care of them for forty years as they wandered in the wilderness, and now He again proves His love to His ancient people by delivering them. Yes, *they shall be saved out of it* (Jeremiah 30:7). *And at that time thy people shall be delivered* (Daniel 12:1). Matthew 24:22 adds; *for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.* The "elect" in this text are unmistakably Jews. (Isaiah 42:1; 45:4, 65:9, 22). In the next few verses, a shocking space war takes place.

V 7. And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his (fallen) angels;

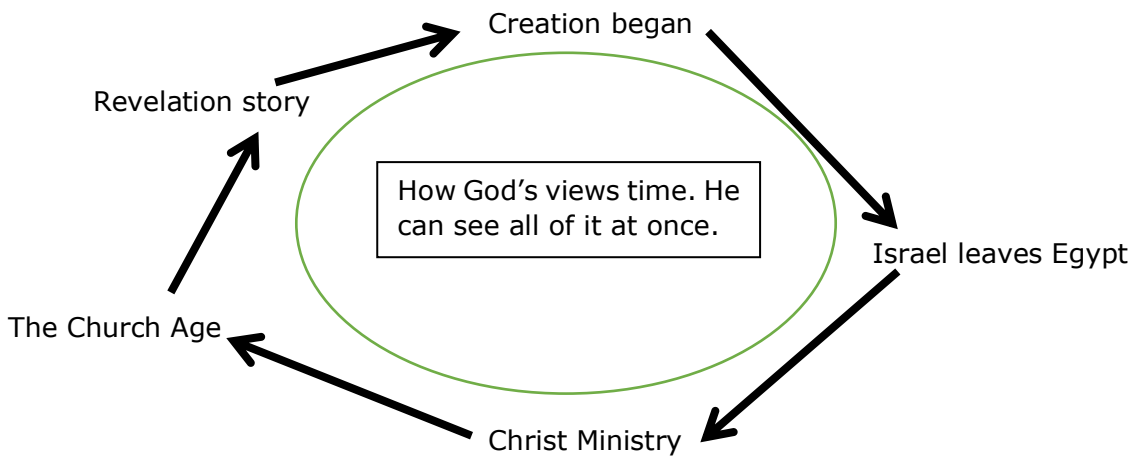
V 8. And prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore in heaven.

V 9. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Here we have a revelation about how mankind and God see time differently. Mankind sees time in a linear fashion, because mankind is "inside of time".

Past Present Future

But we know that God knows the end from the beginning, so God "who is outside of time" see time as a circle. Remember before time was created, God was, and after time has ceased, God still will be.



Some scholars believe that this "space war" in heaven started at the time of the Rapture (Rev. 4:1). Since a war involves a number of skirmishes or battles, this is a distinct possibility. This assumption is based upon Daniel 12:1-2. These scholars' reason that since thought who are caught up in the rapture of the Church, (as described in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4) must pass through the areas where Satan reigns ~ the aerial and stellar heavens ~ Satan become aware of this event and attempts to hinder this evacuation of the saints from the earth. However, as he attempts to interfere in this glorious event, angels, ministers of the saints (Hebrews 1:4), rush to the rescue, and the space confrontation and conflagration begins. This has happened in the past therefore, why could it not happen again? Where did this event happen previously? Archangel Michael is mentioned 5 times in God's Word;

1. Beginning with Daniel 10:13, which is described above. Daniel says: *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me 21 days, but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes [an angelic name & title], came to help me.* God tells Daniel that He every intention of answering his prayers, but for 21 days the devil tried to hinder the answer being sent to you. Finally, God had to send Michael to battle the devil, in the area of his domain, (the first & second heavens) in order to make the answer to Daniel's prayer a reality. Thus, it is possible that Michael will again battle God's adversary at the time of the Rapture, in order to allow Christians to enter into the glory of heaven "in a twinkling of an eye", as promised in 1 Corinthians 15:51-54.
2. He is then mentioned again in Daniel 10:21, where he is described to the children of Israel as *Michael, your prince;*
3. His third mention is in Daniel 12:1; *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince, which stands for the children of thy people.*
4. In Jude 9, we find Michael contending with the devil over the body of Moses. Notice that every time that Michael appears, he is connected with the children of Israel, making it plausible that he is at war with Satan in our present and fifth text, defending the Jewish people.
5. The war is on, and it is the greatest aerial combat in history. *Michael and his angels fought against the dragon* [Satan]; *and the dragon fought and his angels.*

Are you shocked to discover that Satan is in heaven? Most people (including many Christians) imagine him as a little creature, dressed in a red uniform, running around in a place called hell, jabbing his victims with a pitchfork. This image of Satan is not biblical! Satan is a magnificent creation. In fact, it was his beauty which brought his downfall. Ezekiel 28:17 states: *Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou has corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: [therefore] I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.* Not only is it a lie to picture Satan as a grotesque monstrosity, but it is also equally wrong to place him in hell. Up until this stage of scripture, he has never been there. He is *the god of this world [system], the prince of the power of the air, [and] the prince of this world,* as we have already observed.

Since his fall from God's grace, he has been the two levels of heaven below the throne of God (which is the Third heaven). Satan rules & reigns in the aerial and stellar levels of heaven and he will remain there until he is cast to the earth in Rev. 12:9. It is also important to remember that Satan is not cast into eternal hell (the abyss) the eternal lake of fire, to join those he has deceived until AFTER the Millennium reign by Jesus on the earth (Rev. 20:10) Now, as this battle is fought, Satan is defeated.

Praise God! Satan is mighty, but God is ALMIGHTY! Satan can destroy, but God can destroy "the destroyer"! That is why Christians should never fear the events of daily life, because he (the Christian) has victory in Jesus Christ! Yes, *greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world* (1 John 4:4).

Satan's demise began when he was cast out of the third heaven (where God the father & Jesus dwells) (Isaiah 14:12-14), and continues until Revelation 12:9, when he is cast out of the first and second heavens, int the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10). John foresaw that hour and said: *the prince*

of this world [shall] be cast out (John 12:31) and *the prince of this world is judged* (Christmas 16:11).

To the eternal Christ, Satan's doom was as good as accomplished, but for you and me, time had to pass. Now, in our text, the moment has arrived; (Satan and his angels) *prevailed not!* (Rev. 12:8). Michael's gunners zero in, and Satan's place ~ his abiding pace for centuries ~ is found no longer. Instead, the dragon (Satan) *which deceived the whole world* [is] *cast out into the earth, and his angels [are] cast out with him*. This signals the end of Satan's rule in the aerial and stellar heavens, and the victory celebration begins. All-of heaven rejoices over that which Michael's defeat of Satan has accomplished.

V 10. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the Power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused then before our God, day and night.

The spontaneous praise session within this verse occurs because;

(1) Salvation from Satan's atmospheric control has taken place;

(2) God's strength has crushed Satan's might;

(3) The kingdom is about to arrive;

(4) Then the power of Christ will be seen as He comes to establish His kingdom.

Think of it! The united power of the Father and the Son casts the accuser of the brethren out of the heavens.

Did you know that accusing the brethren is Satan's present-day ministry in 2022? He also uses some ministers and "holier-than-thou" church members to accomplish this goal. Listen very carefully. Every bit of slander against another brother, or sister, in Christ, is simply the devil using an individual's mind and vocal cords, to pull down the glory of God. In fact, *devil* means "slanderer."

The term "*False accuser*" in the English Bible is translated from the Greek word *diabolos or devil ...* Thus, Titus states: *The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becomes holiness, not false accusers.* Literally rendered, this verse states: "That the aged women be not she-devils." A woman who gossips is a "she-devil", and a male gossip is a "macho devil". Both are controlled by the power of the vile one. No wonder "lying" is one of the seven sins that God hates (Proverbs 6:16-19).

When Satan is cast into the earth (Rev. 12:9), the hot spot will be terra firma, when men walk and breathe. At this time, there will only be one place, where there is guaranteed safety and victory ~~ in the arms of the Lord Jesus, though His shed blood.

V 11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb; and by the word of their testimony: and they loved not their lives unto death.

These wise saints resisted Satan by the blood covering of Jesus and by the Word of God, dwelling richly in their hearts. There is no other way to win a spiritual battle (Hebrews 4:12). They also overcame Satan by the words of their testimony and loved not their own lives, even unto death. What a crown await them ~ and you also if you are a "true blue" Christian. Thus, John states in Rev. 2:10: *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of [eternal] life.*

Though there is rejoicing in the heavenlies, the picture is quite different for the people "left behind" on the earth.

V 12. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.

At this point in time, Satan unleashes all-of his fury, because he knows that within 42 months (three and a half years), his reign will be ended. So, there is a great anti-Semitic purge released right across all-of the nations of the earth.

V 13. And when the dragon saw that hew was cast out unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

Immediately, without any delay, God intervenes! No-one is going to destroy Israel, the "apple of His eye".

V 14. And to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

This verse describes God in His sovereignty and love, protecting His chose people for $3^{1/2}$ years. The eagle's wings probable indicate an airlift, or some other miraculous speedy escape. God is reminding the Children of Israel of His act of preservation in Pharaoh's Day, and uses the picture of the wings to show them His covering and goodness. He declares: *You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself* (Exodus 19:4). Therefore, safety is promised to His people.

V 15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

The flood undoubtedly portrays a volume of propaganda! Anti-Semitic insinuations, slanders, and slurs, released internationally as "fake news". Yet God promises: *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall life up a standard against him* (Isaiah 59:19).

V 16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

This verse too, is reminiscent of the miraculous deliverance that God provided the Children of Israel during their exodus from Egypt, when the Red Sea closed in over Pharoah and his army. *The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou did blow with thy wind; the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee, oh Lord among the Gods? Who is like thee; glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretches out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.* (Exodus 15:9-12). At this point, Satan reaches the height of his anger.

V 17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and have a testimony of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: THE TWO BEASTS ARRIVE

This chapter reveals and introduces us to the two beasts. The first beast is political and is commonly called the Antichrist, and introduced in verses Rev. 13:1-10. The second beast is religious (known as the False Prophet) and is introduced to us in Rev. 13:11-18.

Both of these beasts are empowered by the power of Satan and form <u>*an unholy trinity*</u>, consisting of Satan (the devil), the Antichrist, and the False Prophet.

Remember that Satan cannot create anything Himself; He can only imitate what God has already created. So here we have another example of the great imitator trying to duplicate the Trinity, to deceive more people and to wreak havoc and disruption upon the earth. In the short time he has left, he makes and all-out attempt to usurp God's position and authority, through his two allies ~ the two beasts of this chapter. If up until this time; if you are still on the earth, you don't believe there is a God: now you will see pure evil rear its ugly heandon the earth.

V 1. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns, ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

As stated earlier, Bible chapters and verse headings did not come into existence until 1531. They are very helpful in locating passages of scripture, **BUT they are not inspired**. At times they are in the wrong place and sometimes cloud the information being presented. Actually, verse 1 above, <u>should be still in chapter 12</u>, for <u>the subject</u> is **Satan**, and his persecution of the "earth dwellers".

Therefore, according to the original Greek manuscript, the personal pronoun should be ***he*** instead of ***I,*** because "he" pictures Satan standing upon the sand of the sea. Therefore, this portion of scripture should read: ***And the dragon was wroth woman …. And Satan stood upon the sand of the sea…***

Satan standing upon the sand of the sea pictures his control over earth's teeming millions at an appointed time (Rev. 17:5), and (Rev. 20:8). This control is established through the Satanically controlled and inspired beasts, who come up out of the sea and the earth. The first beast **(The Antichrist)** rises out of the sea and has 7 heads & 10 horns, and upon his head are 10 crowns. He is in fact a "literal man", demon-possessed, for he (or his power) comes out of the abyss, for *the beast that you saw was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit.* (Rev. 17:8).

The 7 heads, loaded with blasphemy, also portrays the 5 kings who had ruled up until John's Day: the 6th king, who was in power at that time, and the 7th king who will reign as the Antichrist during the Tribulation hour.

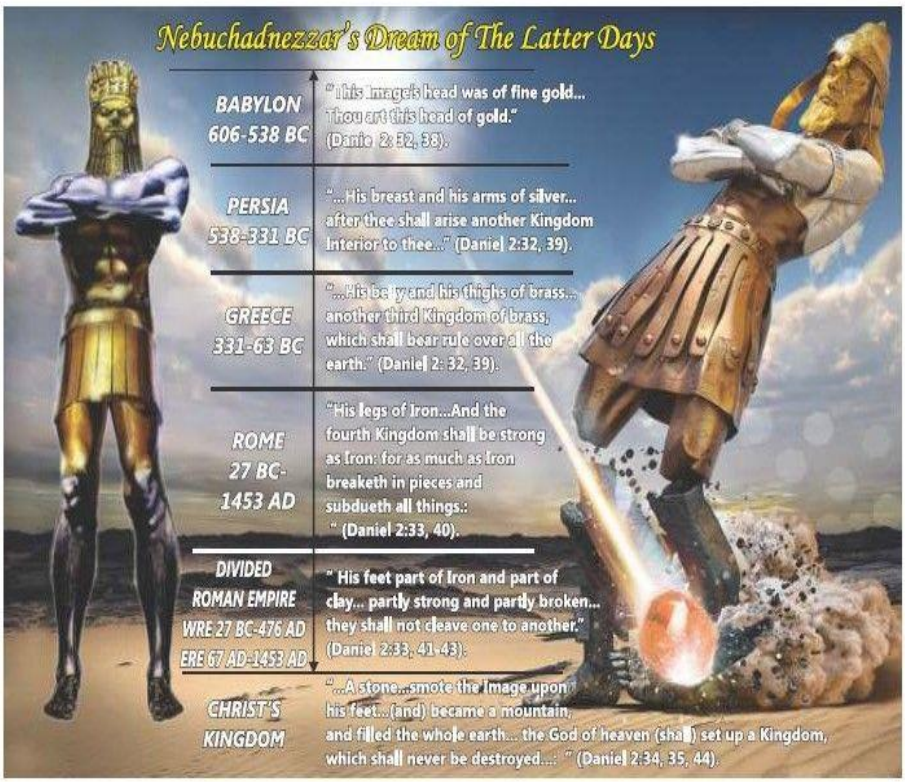
Rev. 17:10 confirms this: *And there are 7 kings: 5 are fallen, and one is, and the other is yet to come; and when he comes, he must continue a short space (time).* Likewise, the 10 horns also pictures 10 nations over who the beast (Antichrist) rules. The scene before us pictures the final, or 7th world leader ruling over a confederation of 10 nations during the end time.

In order to understand that the 10 horns are actually 10 western nations ~ each of which were a part of the old Roman Empire (at the time of Christ). This is well documented in prophecy by Daniel in chapters 2 and 7.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon at the time of Daniel, had a dream which greatly disturbed him, but when he woke up, he could not remember what the dream was about; so, he called all-of his wise men, his magicians, astrologers, and soothsayers together, requesting that they recall the dream and explain it to him. Not one of them was able to do so ~ even under the sentence of death. *And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain. Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king, that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation. Then was the secret revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of Heaven.* (Daniel 2:13,16,19).

Next, we find Daniel in the presence of the king, explaining God's vision to him, in Daniel 2:27-36. This is one of the most important texts in the Bible, because in one prophetic vision, Daniel sees history unfolding from that time, right up till this present day, and into the future as well, right up until the Tribulation Hour.

Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said; The secret which the king has demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king: ***But there is a God in heaven*** *that reveals secrets and makes known unto the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Your dreams and the visions of your head upon your bed are these: As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that reveals secrets makes known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou might know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. The great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee: and the form thereof, was terrible. The image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms were of silver, his belly and thighs were of brass, his legs of iron, his feet ~ part iron and part clay. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor: and the wind carried them away, that no*



place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream.

Nebuchadnezzar was astonished as his dream was revealed to him, and shocked as its interpretation was given. Daniel told the King that he (Nebuchadnezzar) as the leader of the Babylonian empire, was the head of gold, and the two arms of silver (representing the Medes and the Persians) would soon overthrow him. Next, the stomach and thighs of brass (the Grecian empire) would defeat the Medes and the Persians.

Eventually, the two legs of iron (the Roman empire, with headquarters at Rome and Constantinople) would conquer the Grecian empire. **These events occurred EXACTLY as God had revealed them to Daniel and as he, told Nebuchadnezzar.**

Please notice something very important! The tens toes of iron and clay did not destroy the legs of iron ~ the Roman Empire! Why? Because the Rome Empire destroyed itself through internal corruption! See what happens to a nation when corruption takes over; it destroys itself!!!

Therefore, we see that the final world power, is a union of ten western countries, represented by the ten toes of the great image. The iron tells us that these nations were part of the Old Roman Empire, whereas the clay speaks of deterioration as the empire weakened and decayed over the centuries. Thus, the final world power will NOT BE Communism, but a confederation of ten western nations under the leadership of the first beast, (the Antichrist).

The ten toes also coincides with the ten horns of the beast referred to in Rev. 13:1 above. In the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:36-44), Daniel described the toes as kingdoms, concluding with the statement: *And in the days of these kings* [ten of them, as pictures by the ten toes] *shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*

For centuries Christians have prayed Matthew 6:10: *Thy kingdom come.* During the Tribulation Hour, the 144,000 Jewish evangelists of Rev. 7:3-8, will preach the gospel of the kingdom ~ the good news that the King is about to return for his Kingdom. Can you hear them proclaiming, this exciting news in the streets? "The King is coming!" Finally, the King is seen returning in Rev. 11:15, and Rev. 19:16, and the event of the ages takes place when the final confederation of ten western nations has been established (again) on the earth. Could the present European Union be part of this picture? I believe it could be! Rejoice! Jesus is coming soon!

At this point we need to consider another extremely important fact. Ireland and Denmark ~ present Common Market members, were never part of the Old Roman Empire. This apparent problem, however, is quickly resolved when you consider the information presented in Daniel chapter 7. Here we discover that, following the establishment of the ten-nation confederacy,

another world leader arises. He takes control, kicks out three nations, and replaces them with two other nations of his own. Specifically, Daniel says; *I considered the horns* [ten of them], *and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were there of the first horns* [original members] *plucked up by the roots (Daniel 7:8). This confirms perfectly the scriptures of Revelation 13:5.*

Daniel continues further in verses 24-25: *And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most-High.* Here, we not only see the world leader overpowering three kings, and replacing them with original members of the Old Roman Empire ~ we also observe him fulfilling the predictions of the blasphemy described in our text.

There is no doubt about it! A confederation of ten western nations will be formed. Then another leader will appear, remove three nations, replace them, and then rule as the Antichrist until the King of Kings returns to earth and destroys his evil empire. Thus, we will see the Common Market grow to thirteen nations, and these thirteen could eventually control all nations and finally be reduced to ten nations at the end when the ten-toed, ten-horned confederacy is destroyed. This is the event described by Daniel as *a stone cut out without human hands* [breaking] *into pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold.*

Then Daniel 2:44-45 occurs: *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all-of these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.*

Yes, King Nebuchadnezzar's dream has come to pass throughout hundreds of years of history, and the present alignment of western nations in the form of the European Union may well be the final piece of the puzzle. Therefore, *prepare to meet thy God!* (Amos 4:12).

V 2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth, as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

We have already discovered that (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece and (4) Rome constitutes the last four empires of world history. We have also learned that the "Revived Roman Empire", originating in 1948 (the same year that the nation of Israel was reformed), in the form of a final 10-nation confederation, becomes the end-time power block. Daniel chapter 7 pictures these four empires as (1) a lion, (2) a bear, (3) a leopard, and (4) a beast, who is a combination of the previous world powers he has conquered. The beast's empire contains a portion of each of the preceding empires. Actually, the only difference between the descriptions of John (in Revelation) and Daniel is that the order is reversed in Revelation. This is easily explained; John is looking back (in time), while Daniel is looking forward (in time) towards the final ending. Putting this altogether, the message of the 10 horns, the 10 toes, and the four beasts, is one and the same, from different vantage points in time, and all pictures a world dictator governing 10 nations at the time of the end! This 10-nation confederacy constitutes the revival of the fourth power ~ the Old Roman Empire ~ as typified by the fourth monstrous animal, or the beast.

V 3. And I saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all-of the world wondered after the beast.

The wounding of the beast is mentioned 3 times in this chapter ~ in verses 3, 12, & 14. The wound produces death, but restoration to life follows. Some scholars think that this statement represents the fall and restoration of the Old Roman Empire. Others believe it is the resurrection of Judas Iscariot, because he and the Antichrist are the only ones ever called *the sons of perdition* (John 17:12 & 2 Thessalonians 2:3). Only God knows the answer to this one!

A third possibility would be that the Antichrist is assassinated, or killed midway though the Tribulation Hour. (Daniel 11:45). Such an event would give "the great counterfeiter", Satan, the

opportunity to perform a resurrection. This would prove invaluable to the prestige of the Antichrist, since the deity of the Lord Jesus was affirmed by His resurrection 2,000 years before (Matthew 12:39-40). Remember, that the Antichrist proclaims himself God, and even sits in the Tribulation Temple in Jerusalem during the Tribulation period. (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Matthew 24:15).

Thus, a counterfeit resurrection would assure the world that he is all that he claims to be. This is probably the most likely scenario, because when it happens *all-of the world* [wonders] *after him.* Mankind is literally overwhelmed by the Antichrist's power and authority.

V 4. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the best; and they worshipped the beast saying; Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?

Another reason the verse 3 may speak of an actual resurrection, is that millions who previously refused to believe in the Antichrist, now begin to worship him ~ and Satan.

In the second half of this chapter, we will see that the False Prophet or religious leader of the tribulation period, actually enforces the worship of the Antichrist. [Here is a big warning, because God Almighty never forces us to do anything]. Since the people think of him as God, they cry. *"Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"* Yes, who can combat this self-proclaimed god and be victorious?

V 5. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things blasphemies: and power was given unto him to continue for 42 months. [1260 days].

The Antichrist's blasphemies during the final three and a half years of the Tribulation Hour mostly has to do with his mockery of the Almighty. One of the reasons that God Almighty hates idolatry (the use of images in worship) is that He wants to be the full focus of the worship with no rivals. Hear Jehovah in Exodus 20:4 & 5: *Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord am a jealous God.*

Think about the insult to the Eternal One when the Antichrist says: "I am God," and teeming millions bow down to him, to Satan, to the false prophet and to the *"image"* ~ the abomination of desolation ~ erected to honour Satan ~ this blasphemy continues!

V 6. And he (Satan) opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Jesus, the TRUE God, was accused of blasphemy in His day, because He claimed to be God (Matthew 9:3). Ironically, the world accepts the Antichrist's claim of deity, and this perpetrated lie is blasphemy to God. The blasphemy is intensified because Satan himself is speaking. Some Scholars have put forward a scenario which needs consideration.

During the FIRST 42 months of the Tribulation, the Antichrist acts **"under the influence"** of Satan. However, after Satan is cast out of heaven in Rev. chapter 12, and comes down to the earth, he may actually incarnate himself in the dead body of the Antichrist, who had the wound by the sword (unto death).

In Rev. chapter 14 it says that the Antichrist did live again. Thus, the Antichrist is raised from the dead by the counterfeiter (Satan), who then dwells in his body for the last 42 months of the Tribulation period, claiming that "he is God." As a result, he is able to experience that which he sought when he was cast out of heaven, crying out, *I will be the most-high (*Isaiah 14:12-14). Satan's ultimate desire is now realised ~ he is worshipped as God. The blasphemy is unspeakable! He desecrates everything his filthy hands touch, including the Tabernacle and its worshippers.

V 7. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him overall kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

The fight is on for the saints of the Tribulation hour. Remember, this is NOT the Church. Satan battles the Church as they return with Christ (Rev. 19:14). In the scene described in verse 7, Satan is trying to destroy the millions *who washed their robes, and made them white, in the blood*

of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14), and who also refused the mark of the beast (Rev. 20:4). Instead of experiencing defeat, they overcome (Satan) *by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony* (Rev. 12:11).

During this time, Satan controls the whole world. He is an international despot, exercising power over all Tribes, Tongues, and Nations. **Such a world government is now almost upon us.** (Some people say that it is already upon us, but we have not recognised it yet.)

Consider the number of "global organisations" which now exists, across the whole world today in 2022.

1. The International Atomic Energy Agency;
2. The International Labour Organisation
3. The Food and Agricultural Organisation
4. The International Bank for Reconstruction & Development (The World Bank)
5. The International Development Association
6. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
7. The World Health Organisation (WHO)
8. The International Finance Corporation (IFC)
9. The International Monetary Fund (IMF)
10. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)
11. The Universal Postal Union
12. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU)
13. The World Meteorological Association
14. The Intergovernmental Maritime Consultive Organization.
15. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade Organisation

The formation of such international alliances has led outstanding thinkers to state that "a New World Order" is on the horizon. Presently, we maybe witnessing mankind's final approach to the much-publicised New World Order, or one-world government, of the Antichrist. This idea has been reinforced by the actions around the world of Governments, in the way that people were manipulated and controlled in the current Covid Pandemic. At this point in history, all-of the world will be amazed as this self-styled deity takes control, and the majority of the people and nations will submit to his authority. **However, God always has a remnant who will not bow to Baal, or any other deities.**

V 8. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, slain before the foundation of the world.

The "true believers" of the Tribulation Hour will have nothing to do with this Satanic monster, even though they will not be able to buy or sell anything without his approval (Rev. 13:17). Their love for Jesus Christ will mean more than life, shelter, and food. They will love Christ to the end, for John declares, *I saw thrones, and they sat upon them and judgement was given to them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark on their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years* (Rev. 20:4).

We have seen in 2018-2020, live footage on TV of Christians being beheaded for refusing to denounce Jesus Christ and joining Islam. These martyrs are the beginning of those mentioned by John above. This prophecy is being fulfilled in our midst right now.; *And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed* (Romans 13:11).

Is the Tribulation Hour approaching? Will a demon-possessed, or devil incarnate human claim deity, and be accepted as world leader, and be worshipped as God? YES! Without any doubt! Henry Spaak, a spokesman for the Society of Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT) in Brussels, Belgium, the headquarters of the common Market, made a profound

statement relevant to this topic, and that organization's goals and operations a few years ago. He said: "WE do not want another committee. We have too many already. What we want is a man of sufficient stature to hold the alliance of the people and lift us out of the economic morass into which we are sinking. Send us such a man, and be he God or devil, we will accept him." Mr Spaak, your wish will soon become a reality! The life-and-death matter of verses 1 to 8 is so important that God repeats the warning He has given repeatedly to each of the seven churches:

***V. 9 If any man have an ear; let him hear;* [What the Spirit is saying to the whole world]**

Beware!!! Take Heed!! Think Seriously! Why?

V 10. He that leads into captivity shall go into captivity; He that kills with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

This is the exact caution that Apostle Paul stressed in Galatians 6:7: *for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.*

V 11. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb [identifying him with Christianity] and he spoke as a dragon [tying him in with Satan].

Verses 11 through 18 introduce us to the second beast (the religious fake, or also referred to as the False Prophet) who is the third member of the satanic trinity. The devil imitates the Father, the Antichrist imitates the Son, and the false prophet imitates the Holy Spirit. This religious hypocrite fulfills the prediction of the Saviour in Matthew 24:24. *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

V 12. And He exercised all the power of the first beast before him, and caused the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

Clearly, the power of the second best (the false prophet) is in the realm of religion. He is co-equal in power with the Antichrist. This is prophesied in the Book of Daniel. The two Babylon's; Economic Babylon, which controls all-of the governments; and Religious Babylon, which introduce one-world religion, glorifying Satan ~ not God.

Unlike "The Church" and Governments today, these two, work closely together. The Antichrist shares his authority with the false prophet, protecting him and his religious organisation in return for a promise of loyalty and devotion. Thus, as head of the "worldly church", the false prophet sees to it that the Antichrist ~ who was wounded and resurrected ~ is worshipped. What a team! The second beast (the false prophet) is also one of the greatest miracle workers in history.

V 13. And he (the false prophet) does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

These great wonders are called *lying wonders* in 2 Thessalonians 2:9. They are not magical, "sleight of hand" manipulations, but the result of supernatural power from the dragon that enables these men to even produce fire. Since God often revealed himself by fire (Genesis 19:24; Leviticus 10:1-2; 1 Kings 18:38), the false prophet also uses fire. Satan shares his supernatural power for only one reason:

V 14. And deceived them that dwell on the earth by the means of these miracles, which he had the power to do in the sight of the beast: saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image of the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

The sole purpose of all-of these miracles is to prepare the people for idolatry & idol worship. The false prophet actually entices the people to build the greatest statue in history in the very image of the Antichrist. This monstrosity will be in Jerusalem and will be placed in the Jewish Temple. Such a blasphemous act is against the Jewish conscience and is forbidden by the second commandment (Exodus 20:4). This is why the image is labelled the abomination of desolation by the Lord Jesus Christ himself in Matthew 24:15.

V 15. And he had the power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Since the image is able to speak, it might well be the ultimate achievement of our present-day computerised robotic systems, already conducting intelligent conversations and interacting with mankind.

A computer expert has indicated that already there are computers that have the storage capability of over ten trillion human beings. If the Antichrist enslaves the 4 billion people remaining on the earth at the time of the Tribulation hour, he will need a computer that has all-of the facts and locations of every human being on the planet, at his fingertips. As a result, he will know, with accurate precision, who receives his orders, obeys his orders, and honours his laws. He will also know where all-of the rebels are; those individuals who refuse to take the Mark of the Beast, or bow down to his image.

How efficient are modern computers? In 500 milliseconds (half a second) a computer can debit 2,000 checks into 300 different bank accounts, or figure out the company payroll of 1,000 employees.

The Antichrist will certainly use some form of high-speed computer, and it will be fashioned in his own image.

V 16. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark on their right hand, or in their foreheads.

V 17. And that no man might buy or sell, save that he had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

V 18. Here is wisdom. Let him that has an understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of mankind; and his number is 666.

As we have seen, the Antichrist will use computers to enslave the people during the Tribulation hour. Also, he will add extra control, by restricting the buying and selling of products, only to those people who have his mark. This mark will be some type of barcode with the number 666 embedded into the code. Already we have seen developmental fridge display cabinets used presently in supermarkets, which are locked and you need to scan your "666" code to unlock them. The world is already preparing for this time yet to come on the earth.

With the specific reference to verse 18, there are people who claim that they know who the Antichrist is, or will be, but rest assured no-one will know who it is, until after the Church has been raptured as per Rev. 4:1. Still, God's word admonishes us to be wise (Matthew 10:16), and watchful (Matthew 24:42), as the day of Christ's return approaches (Hebrews 10:25).

As shocking as the information in this chapter may be, we are definitely headed for a cashless, cheque less society. To be sure it is later than you think! The reign of the Antichrist is just on the horizon. The new Hitler, with a monstrous computer, which will enslave millions, may soon control the whole earth.

Therefore unbeliever*, seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while he is near* ~ BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!!! (Isaiah 55:6)

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: THE SEVEN VISIONS

The chapter introduces seven (7) visions. Each vision is complete in itself, however, it must be made very clear that these visions are not identified in chronological order, but are explained singerly, so that they can be understood, but in reality, it is really a panorama, with all-of these visions happening through the next 5 chapters. John is seeing these visions through a "wide-angle lens".

For example: The pronouncement of doom and destruction upon Babylon is seen in Rev. 14:8, but the exact details of this event are not explained until Rev. 16:17-21. With this in mind, now let us examine the following chapters.

V 1. And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having "His Father's name" written in their foreheads.

Please notice that it is not the name of Jesus that is written on their foreheads, but the name of God Almighty.

The Lamb, as we already know is the Lord Jesus Christ. John the Baptist called him by this name as he saw the Lord walking upon the earth saying: *Behold, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world* (John 1:29). Also, John sees the Tribulation saints overcoming Satan by the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 12:11). This same Lamb and His Bride are the honoured participants at a marriage feast conducted in Rev. 19:7 which states: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready.*

The Wedding ceremony occurs in heaven, but many think that the wedding feast (after the wedding) will take place here on earth, with the Bride & the Groom, and all the "invited guests." This event will take place after the Lamb has taken up His place on Mount Zion for the Millennium reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. This event will fulfill many, in fact scores of Old Testament prophecies.

Do you realise that Zion, or Jerusalem, is the place that God loves most? Today's anti-Zionists should take heed. If you rebel against Jerusalem ~ or its people, you are rebelling against God Almighty Himself. History shows that no-one, (not even Satan ~ who has more power than we have) can win a victory over God Almighty. *For the Lord has chosen Zion: he has desired it for a habitation. This is my rest for ever: Here I will dwell; for I have desired it.* (Psalm 132:13-14).

While Rev. 14:1 is the only place where Zion is mentioned in the Book of Revelation, it is nevertheless authenticated in an unlimited number of Old Testament passages that point to Jerusalem being the headquarters of Christ's earthly kingdom.

God is saying through this text; "I know that millions are following the Antichrist. I see that the false prophet is scoring many victories as he, through lying wonders and deceits, turns the hearts of multitudes to towards the super-deceiver. However, 666 is the number of mankind. It is the number of incompleteness. It will soon end! Why? Because God has already given us the answer! I have *set my king upon my holy hill of Zion* [or Jerusalem] (Psalm 2:6). God adds: "Though horrendous judgements are about to fall, look up, for your redemption draws nigh. My Son, the Lamb, is about to come forth and take His proper place and position on earth, as King of kings and Lord and lords. He shall soon arrive in Jerusalem."

Prophet Zechariah prophesied that day when he said: *His feet shall stand in that day on the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem, on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, towards the east and towards the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove to toward the north, and half of it toward the south.* (Zechariah 14:4). Additional verses depict the establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom: *beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion on the side of the rock, the city of the great King* (Psalm 48:2).

In Salem (later known as Jerusalem) also is his tabernacle; and his dwelling place in Zion (Psalm 76:2). *Thou shall arise and have mercy upon Zion (Psalm 102:13).* Psalm 110:2 pictures His reign and states: *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in-the-midst-of thine enemies.* And then again in Psalm 146:10 which states: *The Lord shall reign for ever; even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise Ye the Lord.* As He reigns the people are pleased to cry out: *Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.* (Psalm 149:2).

Isaiah the prophet, predicted this time of peace. He said: *Out of Zion shall come forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.* (Isaiah 2:3-4). Jesus Christ is coming soon to sit upon David's throne.

How do I know this momentous event is to take place? Because Israel was recreated as a nation in one day on 14th May 1948, and then Jerusalem, captured by the Jews in the 1967 war, became the undivided capital of Israel on 31st July 1980. **And this is only the beginning!** Soon, Jerusalem will become the capital of the entire world ~ upon the arrival of the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Lord Jesus Christ. The way for this to occur is being prepared in our day ~ can't you see the changes happening in the Middle East, with the re-alignment of Arab nations with Israel? Let's triumphantly shout it from the rooftops: "The King is coming! Amen! The king is coming!"

But first, He must return for **HIS CHURCH, the church that is acceptable to Him, as defined in Revelation chapters 2 & 3,** so that we can return with Him (Rev. 19:14). Thus, the Rapture (the taking away) cannot be delayed any longer. Since we return with Him, and it is visibly manifest, that we must return together soon, this then means that our remaining time on earth is getting more limited as every day passes.

At this point in our text, that time has come! How glorious is the hour of the Lord's return to Jerusalem ~ the capital of the world with His people? Part of His earthly entourage is composed of the 144,000 Jews mentioned in Rev. chapter 7. They have the Father's name written (or inscribed on their foreheads ~ not the name of Jesus). Remember, Jesus said: *if you confess me before men, I will confess you before my Father in Heaven)*. This is the result of the sealing mentioned in Rev. 7:3-4.

V 2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder: And I heard the voice of harpers, harping on their harps.

What a majestic sound fills the heavens and the earth as the heavenly chorus, with the voice of many waters (an unusual number of octaves), crescendos into thunder-like proportions, spills over out of heaven onto the earth. This multitudinous choir is accompanied by harps ~ a symbol of joy. This joy has to do with Christ's redemption of the saints.

V 3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the one hundred forty-four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

This new song of the redeemed JEWS is undoubtedly similar to the new song of the redeemed saints (Christians) of Rev. 5:9: *And they {sang} a new song saying: Thous art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation.* Still the song of the 144,000 differs from the redeemed saints, because it is distinctively their own. The point is that the redeemed, in every dispensation, have something about which they can sing ~ the joy of the Lord. The purity, holiness, and sanctification of this group is described in the next verse.

V 4. These are they which were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruit unto God and to the Lamb.

Some commentators, particularly priests of the Middle Ages, stated that this honour was reserved for them, because they had refrained from sexual intercourse. However, such an explanation is completely wrong, since God's word God's word says there is sanctity in marriage: *For marriage in honourable in all, and the bed undefiled* (Hebrews 13:4). That is why it also says: *Whosoever finds a wife, finds a good thing, and obtains favour with the Lord* (Proverbs 18:22).

The meaning has to do with the undefiled walk of these redeemed Jews, as stated in the next part of the verse: *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes.*

They are free from spiritual fornication as described in James 4:4, which states: *You adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God.*

Idolatry, is the ultimate form of spiritual adultery, and is the rampant sin of the Tribulation period. As we have observed in Rev. chapters 9 & 13. Yet, during this period, there are multitudes who remain true to the Lord. I believe that those "undefiled" mentioned in verse 4, are the people who have not "soiled their clothes" with the things of the world in this period.

This truth is confirmed in 2 Corinthians 11:2, concerning His Church, the Bride of Christ. God says *I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* Both Christ and the Father want pure brides. (Remember, His Church is the bride of Christ, whilst Israel is the bride of the Father). God the Father, is prepared to lose one whole tribe (DAN), so that Israel remains holy.

These Jewish virgins are most likely those referred to in Matthew 25:1-13 ~ the parable of the wise & foolish virgins. In all dispensations, God wants His people to be separate and pure from the world, the flesh, and the devil. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has he that believes with an infidel? And what agreement has the Temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God: as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them; and be ye separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you; And will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord God Almighty* (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

These untainted Jews who walked the pathway of holiness are the first-fruits of the Tribulation period. The harvest is to follow, as millions more turn to the Messiah in the Tribulation period. *And so, all Israel shall be saved; as it is written; There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins* (Romans 11:26-27). Another attribute of the 144,000 Jews in mentioned in the next verse.

V 5. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

God hates the sin of lying. In fact, the Bible lists lying as one of the sins that will keep a person out of heaven (Rev. 22:15). The Tribulation Hour, under the power of the Antichrist produces a world full of deceit. The Antichrist works *lying wonders* (2 Thessalonians 2:9) and multitudes *believe a lie* (2 Thessalonians 2:11).

Even during this period of fraud, the redeemed Jews refuse to follow Satan, who is *a liar, and the father of [all lies]* John 8:44).

Oh, that there would be more disciples who never used deceit, who never passed rumours (usually exaggerated lies), and who refused to listen to the lies that Satan, *the accuser of the brethren* creates! God wants holy people in every dispensation of time. Let's be like Jesus *who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth* (1 Peter 2:22).

V 6. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, kindred, and tongue, and people.

This verse introduces us to the first of the angel, who proclaims a special message to the world. What is the "everlasting gospel" the angel preaches? The word *gospel* simply means "good news." It is also translated as *glad tidings* (Luke 1:19), *good tidings* Luke 2:10), and *good tidings* again in (1 Thessalonians 3:6) his good news always includes the message of the blood in every dispensation. *To [Christ] give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins* (Acts 10:43), and remission of sins is through the blood, for *without shedding of blood is no remission* (Hebrews 9:22).

In addition to proclaiming the everlasting gospel, the angel gives the news, that all who have rejected the message of Jesus, for the mark of the Antichrist (666) are about to be subjected to a series of judgements from God Almighty Himself!

V 7. [The angel said] with a loud voice. Fear God, and give glory to Him: for the hour of His judgement is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters.

The angel's message is God's final call to a Christ-rejecting world, and the message is **"turn or burn: repent or die!** This is mankind's last opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as Messiah, as Lord; Yes, as the true God." Here, God's mercy ends ~ and God's judgement begins!

V 8. And there followed another angel, saying; Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

Here we learn of the impending judgements to be released upon "Religious Babylon" and upon "Political Babylon. We will deal with these in detail later, plus the fact that ALL nations are made to drink of the wine of wrath of her fornication, when we get to these detailed sections. For the present, it is safe to say that the abominable portrait before us, portrays a "one-world church", united and linked to a one-world political system, using every type of corruption imaginable, to promote herself into prominence at the end time. **Beware!**

The present ecumenical effort to unit all religions under a so-called "banner of brotherhood", regardless of one's belief about Christ, is the forerunner of a monstrous fornicator, who makes all nations drink of the wine of her wrath.

V 9. And a third angel followed them saying with a loud voice; If any man worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on their forehead, or in his hand,

V 10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb;

V 11. And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.

This third angel announces the doom of those who worship the Antichrist and his image, and who have received the mark "666" in their foreheads, or in their hands. For the "weak-kneed" sisters of Christendom, who claim that ***"their God of love"*** could never, and would never, punish sinners, the verses above (9-11) are probably the Bible's most graphic pictures of God's punishment!

Although these three verses are self-explanatory, it is prudent to state this same truth again, so that "Christ mockers" will see that there is judgement and hell-fire. Yes, **"Hell is a REAL PLACE,"** & even demons don't want to go there!". These three verses clearly confirm what has been the theme of judgement right throughout the whole Bible. If you reject the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, you will be damned (Mark 16:16) and this is where you will end up, and this will be your punishment FOREVER! **Muslims, Buddhists, and all other idol worshippers BEWARE!**

While Christians and Redeemed Jews are worshipping with Jesus, those who have received the mark of the beast will taste *the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture* [without any dilution or weakening of His wrath, once it is stirred up ~ you get the FULL MEASURE OF IT, *into His indignation!*

This judgement is so horrendous as it is administered "in the presence of Jesus and his angels" that *the smoke of* [the Antichrist's partners and pawns] *ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.* **This is no longer a Jesus who is meek and mild!**

Contrary to some cultist teachings, this judgement is also endless. The words *everlasting* for the lost, and *eternal* for the saved, <u>are the same identical words in the Greek</u>, both places ~ yes in heaven and in hell, lasts for the ages of the ages ~ eternally, everlasting. Thus Matthew 25:46 says: [the lost] *shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.* I repeat once again: both of these situations are of equal duration!

Some reading this may raise an objection that this punishment "cannot be eternal" because the words "day and night" are mentioned. THIS IS COMPLETE NONSENSE! The Book of Revelation constantly uses this terminology in place of "unceasingly".

For example: Rev. 4:8 says that the four living creatures before the throne of God *rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* Isaiah declared this truth in Isaiah 66:24, *For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.* Jesus himself had this text in mind when He said in Mark 9:43, *And if thy hand offend*

thee, cut it off: [for] *it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched.*

The most terrible experience of time and eternity is to be lost ~ to be separated from God forever. Thank God, this awesome portrait does not have to be the future of any human being, for Romans 10:13 victoriously announces that *whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Don't delay making life's most important decision ~ remember ~ there is no guarantee that you will wake up tomorrow, **therefore make your decision today!**

Now the subject of fire makes us recall that during the Tribulation Hour, when one-third of the world's population is reduced (killed) by fire, smoke, and brimstone (Rev. 9:18).

Possessing a fore-knowledge of all these events, and knowing that earthly sorrows can only last as-long-as one has life, the Holy Spirit, through John, gives us an assuring promise about the future.

V 12. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

V 13. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me; Write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

This will be especially true during the Tribulation Hour, when the toils of life are so great. Remember, this is the worst time of heartache and trial in the world's history. The persecution of the Jews in the holocaust by Hitler, or the million people murdered under the Poll Pot regime, will seem like child's play when compared with the events taking place in the Tribulation Hour. Jesus said; *For then shall be great Tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be* (Matthew 24:21). Jesus knows the end from the beginning, and He says there has never been, nor will they ever be, anything like this terror & trial ever again. Now, at last, it is over for some. They have died and now happiness is theirs. They rest from the heartbreaks of life, exchanging them for rewards, as their good works and deeds follow them.

V 14. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the "Son of man", having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

A white cloud, represents "the Shekinah glory of God", and is usually associated with Jesus Christ. This is the same cloud that went before the Children of Israel, as they wandered in the wilderness (Exodus 19:9). This glorious cloud illuminated the transfiguration scene (Matthew 17:5) and *received* [Christ] *out of our sight* at his ascension (Acts 1:9). At the Rapture, all church-age saints, living and dead *will be caught up together … in the clouds* (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Finally, when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to planet earth, *he comes with clouds* (Rev. 1:7). This in verse 14 above, the Son of Man is seen situated upon a cloud, as He comes to thrust in his sharp sickle of Judgement.

V 15. And another angel came out of the Temple, crying, with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud. Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the harvest on the earth is ripe.

V 16. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

One cannot get away from sin forever! *Be sure your sin will find you out* (Numbers 32:23). Sin will catch up with you, and when it does*, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same* (Job 4:8). The time for reaping the whole earth has come, and the sickle, sharp, strong, and steady, does its judgement work. The following verses (17-20) describe this hour, which is the greatest bloodbath in history.

V 17. Another angel came out of the Temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

V 18. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud voice at him who had the sharp sickle, saying; Thrust in the sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.

V 19. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

V 20. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs (1600).

This final scene in Revelation chapter 14, describes the work of two angels. The one with the sharp sickle comes from the temple in heaven, while the other angel, with power over fire emerges from the altar. He immediately orders that the vine be cut off and cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Since **TRUE Christians** (the children of God) are branches of the vine (John 15:5), the members of the **one-world church of the Antichrist and the false prophet,** are called members of Satan's vine.

The time for their pruning or destruction has arrived at last, and they are cut off and cast into the great winepress of God's indignation. Oh, what a purging of branches takes place during this hour! Remember, Jesus said that if a vine does not bear "good fruit" it will be cut off and thrown into the fire (John 15:1-2).

This purging begins in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and become centred in the Valley of Jezreel, which is on the plain of Esdraelon, near the hill of Megiddo (Rev. 16:16). *I will gather ALL nations, and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom, they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning forks into spears: let the weak say I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all you heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause they mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all-of the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down: for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision* (Joel 3:2, 10-14). It is interesting that, in the first book written (chronologically) ~ way back before Abraham or Moses, we have Joel prophesying about the end-time judgements. [But, before this battle takes place, the world has to experience **World War III**, referred to as the Great War.]

Eventually, the battle encompasses the entire nation of Israel and is, of course, global in involvement, as the armies of the whole world meet in the Middle East for the final holocaust ~ which we know as the Battle of Armageddon.

The result is a 200-mile-long area (1600 furlongs) soaked in blood. Interestingly, the nation of Israel is 200 miles long, from north to south. As stated in Ezekiel 29:8-16, it takes 7 months to bury the dead, and the armaments are burnt for 7 years afterwards. The tense Middle East situation clearly signals the return of Jesus Christ.

In light of this unprecedented devastation just described, the following need to be considered. **First of all**; after Russia sorts itself out over the Russia-Ukraine invasion, the prophecy indicates that some time in the future Russia, (under the names of Gog, Magog, Meshech, Tubal and Rosh) will invade Israel. The largest army in the world will converge on the Middle East. Ezekiel tells us that they will come up like a cloud (Ezekiel 38:16). John tells us that *the number of the army of the horsemen* [is] *two hundred thousand-thousand, or 200 million.* (Rev. 9:16).

Secondly, the weapons used are the deadliest in the history of mankind. *A fire goes before Him* (Psalm 97:3). *For behold, the Lord will come with fire* (Isaiah 66:15). *The flaming flame shall not be quenched* (Ezekiel 20:47). *A fire devours before them* (Joel 2:3). Who are devoured? The northern army from Russia, that is driven back to Siberia. Hear God's statement: *But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he has done a great thing* (Joel 2:20).

This retreat is effectual in Joel 2:30, for the prophet states: *And I [saw] wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars [or literally, columns] of smoke.* These are the exact characteristics of a nuclear blast! *The whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy* (Zephaniah 1:18). *For, behold, the day comes, that shall burn as an oven* (Malachi 4:1).

Now we understand why the nation shall be drenched in blood. No wonder Jeremiah 30:7 says: *Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it.* Daniel 12:1 adds: *there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was* [before]. This time is so horrendous, that there has never been anything like it in the past, nor shall there be anything like it in the future. This is a "once in a mankind event". Jesus agreed. He said in Matthew 24:21, *For then shall be great, tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.* Revelation 9:18 adds: *By these three was the third part of men killed, by fire, and by smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

Finally, Russia is going to be smashed in the Middle East. The "Proof" is in God's word: *Therefore (in conclusion) thou son of man prophecy against Gog, and say; Thus says the Lord God: Behold I AM against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee* [5/6th of his army shall be destroyed] (Ezekiel 39:1-2). Later, the battle of Armageddon, will be fought and will assuredly become History's most terrifying holocaust.

However, the good news is that, as a Christian, **you will not be present ~ and if you are not yet a believer, you do not have to be present either. So, I plead with you to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour without delay.**

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: THE PREPARATION FOR THE SEVEN VIAL JUDGEMENTS

Revelation chapter 15 is a preparatory chapter of only 8 verses and they serve as an introduction to the seven vial (or bowl) judgements, which are described in more details in chapter 16.

V 1. And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous; seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

The vision that John now sees in heaven is awe-inspiring. Seven angels appear (possibly the same seven messenger angels, who gave God's warnings to the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3); for they are about to pour out the seven final plagues upon the earth. This is the completion of God's judgement, when His wrath is released upon a rebellious mankind.

V 2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

As explained in Rev. 4:6, the sea of glass speaks of and represents tranquillity. It is calm and stable and it typifies:

1. The Church at rest, or
2. God's living Word.

Solomon's Temple contained a sea of glass, depicting the Word of God, as a means of sanctification. Notice the sea of glass in this text is mixed with fire. This is a beautiful picture of the Disciples standing firmly for Christ under the test of fire, hence being purified, having their feet planted firmly on the Word of God.

Apostle Peter speaks of this matter when he says; *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ* (1 Peter 1:7). Therefore, there is no doubt whatsoever that the Tribulation saints enjoy victory over the beasts, his image, his mark, and the number of his name (666) by the Word of God, prayer, and their testimonies. They died for the name of Jesus, and are conquerors because of their death.

Had they remained alive, by accepting the beast, and his number, they would have been losers. Instead, they are victors, because *to die in Christ is gain* (Philippians 1:21). This is why they stand on the sea of glass ~ a picture of the Word of God ~ and are also serenaded and soothed by heaven's harpists ~ the symbol of joy.

V 3. And they sang the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

V 4. Who shall not feat thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgements are made manifest.

This group, saved out of the Tribulation Hour, sings the Song of Moses. Why would this group of people in the Tribulation period do this? Back in Exodus chapter 14, Moses and his people were being hotly pursued by the Pharaoh and his armies. Finally, The Israelites arrived at the Red Sea. Then God parted the waters, so that His people could cross over on dry land. As Pharaoh's armies followed, the waters closed in over them and they all died.

The Israelites, realising that God had protected them from their enemies, the Egyptian ruler ~ a type of the Antichrist, began to sing a song of worship, praise, and adoration to Jehovah. *The horse and the rider has been thrown into the sea* (Exodus 15:1). Now, centuries later, redeemed Jews, who through death left earth's Tribulation miseries behind, sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. The words are, *Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true thy ways, thou King of saints.*

Verse 4 reflects the attributes of the King of the Nations during the Millennium. Then He is revered because the world fears and glorifies His name. Also, in homage and respect to His holiness and His mighty acts of judgement and subjugation, all nations come to worship in His presence. This is predicted in Isaiah 2:2-3: *And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all the nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say: Come ye, and let us go up to the mountains of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law; and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

Zechariah agrees in Zechariah 14:16-17: *And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left, of all the nations, which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year, to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be, that whosoever will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.*

V 5. And after that, I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened;

The Ark of the Testimony was kept in the Temple, or Tabernacle, or the Holy of Holies. Under Moses, it was concealed from the eyes of the people. Its mysteries were beyond their understanding. That day is now finally over. The way of the Holiest is now open to all, including the Tribulation saints. Now they may view His workings, because they now have access to His abiding place.

V 6. And the seven angels came out of the Temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

The sight of the seven angels coming out of the Temple is breathtaking and also frightening. In the earthly Tabernacle and Temple, men were not allowed entrance. Even the High Priest could only go in once per year, and then only after rigid ceremonial standards had been observed. The angels however, have been admitted because "they are created beings" of holiness ~ (not "God-made" like mankind), and have been assigned to administer the upcoming Vial (Bowl) judgements. The pure white linen and the golden girdles worn by these angels are the same garments of clothing worn by the Old Testament priests. In other words, angel-priests are about to judge the world from the place where God's Law rests ~ The Holy of Holies. This judgement is necessary because mankind has desecrated God's laws globally and defiled the earth.

The fact that there are seven angels ~ the number of perfection and completeness proves that no stone will be left unturned as they execute their seven judgements upon planet earth ~ there

will be no place to hide from these judgements! Hence as they leave the Temple, they are given their vials, or bowls of judgement.

V 7. And one of the four beasts [before the altar] gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever.

V 8. And the Temple was filled with the smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

In concluding this chapter, verse 8 proves that the Temple area is shut and sealed to both angels and men during the final forty-two months (1260 days) of the Tribulation Hour. Remember all-of the events that we have been viewing, a seen by Apostle John have been happening in a panorama ~ not sequentially. God's throne, which symbolises mercy, and love, is shut to the public until this entire period of judgement ends. This of course, is during the outpouring of the seven bowls of unprecedented judgements. When God's judgement is completed, men may then again approach the Mercy Seat. Until that time, however, all is hazy and dark because of the smoke which fills the temple continually for 42 months.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: THE SEVEN BOWL JUDGEMENT BEGINS

The information presented in this chapter of 21 verses must cause all men to closely examine their relationship with Almighty God. The events we are about to explore, are both awesome and terrifying. This will depend upon where you are situated, when you are watching these events unfold.

The only consolation for the believer, is that he/she will not be present on the earth when these events take place. By the time we have reviewed this chapter, we will be able to really appreciate the words of Apostle Paul in Titus 2:13: *Looking for that blessed hope; and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* The final seven judgements of the Tribulation Hour are about to begin.

V 1. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels; Go your ways, and pour out the vials of wrath of God upon the earth.

The voice of Almighty God (Himself ~ not through an angel), issues forth from the smoke-filled Temple, (again confirming that the Temple is now closed to both angels and mankind), directing the angels to carry out their duties. Remember, God Himself, is sending forth these judgements.

His holiness has been offended. Mankind, that He created, has worshipped a man ~ the Antichrist, the devil in human skin, ~ even bowing to his image, *the abomination of desolation* (Matthew 24:15). The true and eternal God is justly angry. He cannot allow this iniquity to go unpunished and unjudged.

In Isaiah 42:8, Jehovah says, *I AM the Lord: this is MY name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.* Again in Exodus 20:4-6: *Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shall not bow down thyself, to them, nor serve them: for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation for them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.* Because mankind, *en masse, has grossly violated* this commandment during the Tribulation period, the promised judgements must begin.

Please note, for those denominations, who proclaim that you no longer have to obey the Law of Moses, we see that God Almighty still expects these Laws to be obeyed ~ even in the Tribulation period ~ after The Church have been taken up into heaven. There is a no scripture (that I could find) that says God introduced the Laws ~ and then removed them ~ and then re-applied them again.

THE FIRST BOWL JUDGEMENT

V 2. The First [angel] went, and poured out his vial upon the earth: and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped the image.

Think about this for a moment: God knows the end from the beginning; He knows who has the mark of the beast, and who has bowed down to the image of the beast. The vial that is poured our only affects those who have the mark of the beast and those who have bowed down to the image. Just like in the time of Moses in Egypt, the Egyptian's were attacked with sores, but the Jews were not affected.

What a scene, as the first bowl is poured out, and men become covered in ulcerated sores! They had the mark of the beast (666) ~ and now, they have the mark of God ~ ulcers. These festering infections probably obscures the beast's number.

Can this scripture be taken literally? Yes, because the plague described here is similar to the one of past history in Egypt. Exodus (9:8-11) *And the Lord said unto Moses and unto Aaron; Take to you, handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven, in the sight of the Pharaoh. And it shall become small dust in all-of the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth with blains* [ulcerated sores] *upon man, and upon beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses, because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians and upon the Egyptians.* What a terrible price to pay, for not believing in Almighty God!

THE SECOND BOWL JUDGEMENT

V 3. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

This event has happened before where the waters have turned in to blood: Exodus 7:17-21, says: *Thus says the Lord: In this thous shall know that I AM the LORD: Behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned into blood. And the fish that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink: and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river. And the Lord spoke unto Moses, Say unto Aaron; Take thy rod, and stretch out thine have upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all-of their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all-of the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of the Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all-of the waters that were in the river turned to blood. And all-of the fish that were in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.* If God can do it once ~ He can surely do it again! He is the omnipresent, all-powerful God, and He says what He means and means what He says. He never breaks a promise. Just think, all-of the ice at the North and South Poles turned into blood. If we think back to the opening of the **Second Seal** (Rev. 6:3-4), we will remember that it brought great bloodshed upon the earth, and the **Second Trumpet** blast (Rev. 8:8) caused 1/3rd of the sea to turn into blood. In Rev. 16:3 above, every creature in the sea dies when the water is turned into blood. The result is that the whole earth stinks as these creature's decay.

Just think of it ~ heaps of dead fish floating in a sea of blood, or washed upon the beaches to become a stinking mess!!

That which previously meant Life in the scriptures now signifies death; *the life of the flesh is in the blood* (Leviticus 17:11) ~ and also symbolised salvation ~ *the blood of Christ* [God's] *Son cleanses us from all sin* (*1 John 1:7)*. This now becomes the symbol of condemnation and death. Wait! As they say in the advertisements; "There's more!" The third vial extends the destruction to all bodies of water right across the earth. This then becomes an international problem, as the world no longer has any drinking water.

THE THIRD BOWL JUDGEMENT

V 4. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of water; and they became blood.

V 5. And I heard the angel of the waters say; Thou art righteous, O Lord, which is, and which was, and which shall be, because thou hast judged thus;

V 6. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink: for they are worthy.

V 7. And I heard another out of the altar say; Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgements.

By this time, one may be tempted to believe that God's actions are not just. But that is not true! God is a just, holy, and righteous God. God is always equitable, fair, and righteous in his dealings with mankind. Genesis 18:25 states: *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do, right?* No man has all-of the facts in his possession. Therefore, he must wait until he meets God, face-to-face. Then and only then, will, he be able to make an unbiased decision.

Please notice that the angelic beings have different responsibilities upon the earth. In the texts above we see that that angel over the waters justifying God's actions by saying: *Thou art righteous, O Lord [the eternal One] … because of thy judgements.* In effect the angel is saying, "The wicked beast worshippers, who shed the blood of so many of Your saints and prophets, may not be satisfy their insatiable lust for blood, by drinking it to their heart's content. They deserve what has happened to them! You have answered the prayers of your saints, who are under the altar (Rev. 6). As this message of vindication to the Almighty God is concluded, a voice from the altar replies, 'Even so', or 'Amen'".

THE FOURTH BOWL JUDGEMENT

V 8. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

In the Third Bowl Judgement all-of the water turns to blood, so that they have no water to drink & now the temperature of the sun heats up and scorches the people & they have no water to soothe their sunburnt skin. The degree of punishment and torture is increasing.

V 9. And men were scorched with great heart, and blasphemed the name of God, which has power over the plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.

The inhabitants of planet earth now experience the greatest heatwave in history. This does not just apply to mankind, but to all-of the animals and birds (because all-of the fish of the seas are already dead.) Many of us remember the high summer heat waves in the 1980's when crops were parched and great numbers of man and animals died ~ with temperatures well over 40° degrees Celsius for days on end. Now we see what happens the sun temperature is out of control. The prophet Isaiah predicted this in Isaiah 24:4-6: *The earth mourns and fades away, and the world languishes and fades away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore, has the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and a few men left.*

The earth becomes so hot during that judgement that all-of the ice on both poles and the Himalayas and all other mount ranges melts and the seas of blood rise. The heat is do great that God Almighty shortens the daylight hours to alleviate all-of the suffering. Jesus said in Matthew 24:22, *And except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh saved: But for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened.*

Now we know that The Tribulation Period cannot be shortened, because it has been proclaimed in more than three places in scripture. It also proclaimed that the half point in the Tribulation shall occur after 1260 days; so, the half-point of the Tribulation period is also set (Rev. 11:2).

Some may think that this can't happen, but think, God has stopped the sun before, so He (who created the sun) and set the timetable for day and night hours can change it if He wishes. Does this muck up all light sensitive equipment on earth? Most definitely; but that day will still be 24 hours; it will mean that the sunlight hours shall be less. Jesus even predicted that this would take place: *Immediately after the Tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened* (Matthew 24:29). This statement confirms Rev. 6:12 which says; *And I beheld, when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair.* God's method of shortening the daylight hours hinders the sun's death purge of earth's inhabitants, by reducing the number of ultraviolent rays bombarding the earth. This act of mercy is for His people, the saved Tribulation Saints, for He adds in Matthew 24:22, *But for the "elect's sake" those days shall be shortened.*

We must again remember that HIS CHURCH, *the elect Bride of Christ,* composed of all those who were born again, prior to the Rapture, (*the taking away*) in Rev. 4:1, are already at home in glory with the Lord. This earthly group of Tribulation Saints presently being discussed, constitutes the "election" mentioned in Romans 11:26. **THESE ARE JEWS!** They are not members of the Bride of Christ ~ **but members of the wife of Jehovah** (Isaiah 42:1; 45:4; 65:9,22).

Instead of repenting and turning back to God, mankind's reaction to the scorching fire, take the form of further rebellion ~ (they refuse to learn from their previous mistakes). Instead of repenting and appealing to God, who has the power to stop the plague (Rev. 16:9), the people aim a barrage of 4-letter blasphemies at God Almighty. The human heart is extremely callous, and wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). Even in the face of such agonizing judgement, repentance, restitution, and reconciliation, are the farthest things from mankind's mind. Truly they are hardened sinners, so the punishments get more severe.

THE FIFTH BOWL JUDGEMENT

V 10. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

V 11. And blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pain and their sores, and repented not of their deeds (sins).

The fourth bowl judgement produced unusual brightness through the scorching rays of the sun, the fifth bowl judgement unleashes thick darkness upon the very throne of the Antichrist and throughout his empire ~ the earth. This could certainly be related to the shortening of the days and the lengthening of the nights, as previously described. Whatever this darkness is, we can take it to be literal, as was the previous case with the Egyptian plague described in Exodus 10:21-23: *And the Lord said unto Moses; Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over all-of the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven: and they was darkness in all-of the land of Egypt for three days; but all-of the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.*

What a thrilling moment for the elect saints upon the earth! They see Satan's leadership completely humiliated internationally, as the power of God is unleashed upon his seat of government. This event is equated to the "day of the Lord." *The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light* (Amos 5:18). *Let all-of the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord comes: for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spreads upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there has not been ever the like* [militarily]*, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations* (Joel 2:1-2).

Who is the military colossus that produces such darkness and gloominess in the last days? Russia! *But I will remove far off from you the northern army; and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part towards the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he has done great* [frightful] *things* (Joel 2:20). The only nation in the world north of Israel with a barren area and two oceans

surrounding it is Russia. This the same nation that comes against Israel from the north in Ezekiel 38:15, and is known by the names Magog, Meshech, Tubal and Rosh. How near it now appears, especially now that Russia is flexing its muscles against its neighbours in Ukraine!

In our text, that "Day of the Lord" has arrived! The wicked gnaw their tongues for pain, but continue blaspheming the God of heaven. Apparently, no amount of punishment for sin can change some people! **They repented not! [Without repentance, they shall not see God!] Don't let it happen to you!**

THE SIXTH BOWL JUDGEMENT

V 12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

V 13. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

V 14. For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world; to gather them together to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

V 15. Behold, I come as a thief, Blessed is he that watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

V 16. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

There are similarities between this sixth Bowl Judgement and the sixth Trumpet Judgements.

In Rev. 9:13, the sixth angel issues his command ~ as he does, 4 angels are released from the great Euphrates River ~ the area of present-day Iran, Iraq, & Syria. As a result, a total of 200 million troops appears from the Orient (East of the Euphrates) (Rev. 9:6). This has to be the largest military assembly in mankind's history.

In Rev. 16:12 we witness the Euphrates River drying up in order for the "kings of the east" to cross over on dry land. The picture of kings here indicates the military leaders of the troops. God Almighty is removing any hindrance from their path so that they can participate in the greatest war ever to be fought on the earth ~ the Battle of Armageddon.

Actually, this war is a fight against the Lord of Hosts, with the heavenly armies and all-of the nations of the world, who come up against Israel to destroy Israel. This war is predicted in Psalm 2:20:4: *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying: Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sits in heaven shall laugh: The Lord shall have them in derision.*

How near is Armageddon? Bear in mind that both Rev. chapters 9 & 16 mention the Euphrates River as a focal point of this war. Keep your eyes on the Middle East ~ these three nations all claimed the Euphrates when it was the nation of Persia, and when these three countries become allies, instead of enemies, watch out!

Between the 6th and the 7th Trumpet Judgement there was a "Time Out." Now we find another "Time out" between the 6th & the 7th Bowl Judgements. This is included in Rev. 16: 13-16 already quoted.

Rev 16:13 reveals three unclean spirits, like frogs coming out of the mouths of:

1. The Dragon Satan Himself;
2. The Beast, The Antichrist, and
3. The False Prophet ~ the head of the "one-world" church ~ which glorifies Satan, not Jesus Christ.

What we see then, is an "unholy trinity", being controlled by the power of evil spirits in an environment of Occultism, as already explained in Rev. 9:20-21. The symbolism of "frogs", for the text says "like" frogs is a symbol of uncleanliness.

The plague of frogs in Egypt produced an obnoxious stench that filled the land with indescribable odours and filth (Exodus 8:14). Thus, the picture before us is clear ~ the counterfeit trinity, comprising the Devil, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet ~ producing "Deceiving" supernatural miracles, through the power of the devil and his demonic spirits, thus deceiving the kings of the earth into believing that they are gods. Because of this the kings willingly follow them to the Middle East for the great day of God Almighty, which is Armageddon. The entire situation reeks in God's nostrils.

Rev. 16:15 is a pause or lull before the storm. God says He will come as a thief.

This again proves that HIS CHURCH is not present on the earth, for that day shall not overtake believers as a thief (1 Thessalonians 5:4). The words of Verse 15 then, constitute a final admonition to the Tribulation saints, telling them to be watchful for His coming and to continue walking in the pathways of righteous and holiness. The terms *watcheth* and *garments* refer to slothfulness and carelessness, spiritually speaking. For example: In the days of Jesus Christ *a one-piece garment* was removed at bedtime. It was worn only during the waking hours. Here the Lord tells the final group, or the "gleaning of Tribulation saints" to watch, for in so doing, they will be awake and clothed. The command is to be prepared! Preparation voids their being found naked and ashamed.

The same is true for believers today. When Jesus comes, multitudes will stand at the judgement Seat naked (without rewards) and ashamed, because they were not watching. Heed the warning of John 2:28: *And now, little children, abide in him;* [so that] *when He will appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*

Rev. 16:16 names the location of the great day of God Almighty: Armageddon, or "the Mount of Megiddo" ~ the place where numerous battles have occurred throughout history. Armageddon will also be the scene of the final battle when the winepress of the wrath of God is released upon the nations.

THE SEVENTH BOWL JUDGEMENT

V 17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial int the air: and there came a great voice out of the Temple of heaven, from the throne, saying: It is done.

V 18. And there were voices, and thunders and lightnings: and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

V 20. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

V 21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of hail: for the plague thereof was exceeding great

Satan is *the prince of the air* (Ephesians 2:2). This is *why we wrestle ... against* [evil spirits] *in high places* (Ephesians 6:12). The seventh angel, in pouring his bowl *into the air*, is destroying the last tracers of Satan's abiding place. Satan has nowhere to hide. Armageddon, as will be explained Rev. chapter 19, also destroys every nook and cranny where Satan has had as a resting place. As this occurs, a voice cries out from the temple of heaven and victoriously shouts; *It is Done!* The twenty-one judgements are completed.

Interestingly, when Jesus Christ bore the judgement for our sins on the cross, He cried out: *IT IS FINISHED.* Now, as unregenerate mankind pays the price for their sins of not repenting and allowing Christ to bear their load, a voice from heaven again cries, *It is finished.* There will be no more judgements. Judgement number twenty-one is the final Judgement!

The seventh outpoured bowl produces thunders, lightnings, and the most devasting earthquake ever to appear on the earth. The Prophet Haggai undoubtedly predicted this when he stated: *For thus says the Lord of Hosts: … I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations* [Christ] *shall come* (Haggai 2:6-7).

One should note that the seventh Bowl does not bring about the end of the world ~ even though all-of the islands disappear. Instead, the Lord Jesus Christ returns at that time, establishes His earthly kingdom, and rules from Jerusalem for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4). Still, this is the end of civilisation as we know it. The destruction divides the great city of Jerusalem, into three parts, and causes every major city in all-of the nations to fall. In addition, every island flees away and all-of the mountains become dislocated, even to the point of disappearing into the sea. However, the worst judgement is reserved for Babylon, which receives a cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. This is covered in Rev. 18.

The climax is the raining down from heaven of hailstones weighing between 86 to 120 pounds. The Greek talent weighed 86 pounds, the Troy talent weighed 96 pounds, and the Jewish talent weighed 120 pounds. Whatever measurement is used, these hailstones (travelling at terminal velocity) will do more than dent cars or demolish homes. It will literally pulverise everything in sight.

In spite of all of this, the people still remaining on the earth still refuse to repent and continue to call God dirty names. Mankind never learns. Finally, they must die, and suffer eternal banishment from God in a fiery hell. Even then they weep and gnash their teeth (Matthew 8:12). Although weeping denotes sorrow, gnashing of teeth depicts cursing.

No wonder God's word says that *the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever* (Rev. 14:11).

I pray that none of this will ever be your experience. Make certain that you have been accepted by the first "It is Finished" cry of Jesus Christ upon the cross at Calvary. Do not delay and then hear the "It is done" wail of judgement in the 21st Bowl judgement. Christ died for YOU; He shed His blood for the remission of YOUR sins, and He longs to save you, before it is too late!

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: RELIGIOUS BABYLON DESTROYED

In Chapter 17, God Almighty calls a halt and explains Rev. 14:8 in more detail. Similarly, Chapter 18, God Almighty calls a halt and explains Rev. 16:19 in more details; so that you are very clear in understanding what is about to happen in Chapter 19.

In Rev. 14:8 we read: *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

In chapter 16, just concluded, we learnt that *great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of wine of the fierceness of His wrath* (Rev. 16:19). As has already been identified, **the *Babylon* of chapter 14 is a RELIGIOUS SYSTEM*, whereas the Babylon of chapter 16 is a POLITICAL SYSTEM.***

Chapter 17 therefore, is the rise and fall of the ecumenical world church, the one-world religion, which gives glory to Satan, not to God Almighty!

Chapter 18 therefore, is the rise and fall of the one world political system, referred to as the one-world government, which is controlled by Satan.

So now let us look at chapter 17 in detail, remembering we are now looking at the rise & fall of one-world religion.

V 1. And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me; Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgement of the great whore that sits upon many waters.

Here we see one of the seven angels who administered one of the seven judgements, speaking to Apostle John, and inviting him to view the judgement of the great harlot who sits upon many waters. The phrase "many waters", speaks of religious control over humanity, that is internationally. This is confirmed in verse 15: *The waters which thou saw, where the whore sits, are people, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

V 2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Here we discover, that the worldwide religious system holds both the earth's leaders, and the people, within its grasp **THROUGH DECEPTION!!!** The fornication committed, is between these "worldly leaders" and the church. Remember that spiritual fornication, has to do with idolatry, including all its evil connotations and associations.

Spiritual fornications also has to do with Christianity embracing other forms of religion, for example; **Chrislam**, where they claim that the God of Christianity and the God of Islam is the same God. This is impossible! Because the God of Christianity has a Son, Jesus Christ; whereas Allah, the god of Islam, has no son!

This is in fact, "the church" leaping out of Christ's arms, into the arms of "another lover" ~ which is a false lover, and hence towards eternal destruction.

God's Word clearly instructs **"TRUE CHRISTIANS"** to be separated from the world (Romans 12:2), specifically cautioning them *NOT to fall in love* with the world, in anything, or with anything, it contains (1 John 2:15). Those who disregard these commands are spiritual adulterers, or fornicators.

That is why James 4:4 declares, *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship with the world is enmity with God?* Harlotry and whoredom, then, speak of idolatry and worldliness.

There is a lyric from a song which says, ***you can't run with the devil, and walk in the Promise Land,*** and this is a true statement: *Choose this day whom you will serve … as for me and my house, we choose to serve the Lord* (Joshua 24:15).

During the Tribulation Hour, (which again I must remind you is in fact 7 years) a vast international religious system (the great whore of Rev. 17:1) creates impure alignments with kings, rulers, and presidents, in an unprecedented way, (Similar with the alignment of Islam & Hitler in WWII to kill Jews)! **[But this time, the alignment will be to kill Christians, as well as Jews].**

Her control is so overwhelming, that humanity becomes mentally stupefied or hypnotically drugged, as they are made to drink spiritually of this intoxicating brew of religious/political alliances.

V 3. So, he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

At the point, Apostle John, guided by the Holy Spirit, observes *the woman* (or worldly church) sitting *upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.* We saw the same beast in Rev. 13:1: *I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns.*

We can recognize him as the Antichrist, who came to power through a confederation of western nations, pictured by the 10 horns and the 10 toes, discussed previously.

The only difference between the present text and Rev. 13:1 is that the beast is now described as being scarlet in colour. Most scholars believe that this colour change reflects his bloody assault upon the world as he rises to power.

He begins his reign with a false peace pact (Daniel 9:27), which he later breaks. As a result, millions of people are slaughtered during his rule. Now, he bears the colour of the executioner!

I personally believe that he bears the colour of scarlet, because the sea and all-of the water on earth changes to blood. It is a signal that there is nowhere to hide from the punishment of God Almighty ~ even the Antichrist has to bear this colour of his impending judgement.

V 4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet-colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

As this "world church" is described, please keep in mind that the **TRUE CHURCH ~ "HIS CHURCH"** ~ "**THE BRIDE OF CHRIST"** is already in Heaven (Rev. 4:1).

Her members were Raptured "taken out of this world", from all nations, tribes, and tongues, and from many (but not all) denominations.

In fact, the song was recorded in Rev. 5:9; *Thou was slain, and has redeemed us to God, by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation.* You could not sing this song in Rev. 5:9 if you were NOT already in heaven. The lyrics clearly prove that they trusted in the precious blood of Jesus for salvation. There is no other way into heaven except through the salvation Blood of Jesus (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Cain rejected the blood and tried to appease God with a vegetable offering (Genesis 4:3), but God said: *It is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul* (Leviticus 17:11). One cannot get to heaven by following *the commandments of men* (Matthew 15:9), observing the traditions (Mark 7:9), or as a result of works (Titus 3:5).

Therefore, those who believed and obeyed God's teachings concerning the blood of the Lamb are in heaven, whilst the **"false church," the "apostate Church",** the great whore that sits upon many waters, controls peoples and nations upon the earth. This false religious system of the Tribulation Hour, is a complete union of the church and the world. It promotes worldly values and morals ~ not those of Jesus Christ and His Word. The members of this worldly church, are "the leftovers"; the ones from all the denominations that Jesus said were not worthy to be part of the Bride of Christ.

They were either morally, or doctrinally wrong! In God's eyes, one is just as bad as the other! The doctrinally wrong ones are described in 2 Peter 2:1,3. *But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction … whose judgement now of a long time lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not.*

The morally wrong are pictured in Jude verses 8-21. NOW we understand why theology and morality are so important! When God says: *ALL have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.* (Romans 3:23) He means **ALL**! When He declares, *the wages of sin is DEATH* (Romans 6:23). He means punishment! When He declares; *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin* (1 John 1:7), He means just that! There are no two ways about it! **GOD SAYS WHAT HE MEANS & MEANS WHAT HE SAYS!**

If anyone rejects Gods word, (and does not REPENT!) He will end up among this Tribulation crowd of self-indoctrinated, religionists, in a world church, already destined for eternal damnation.

Secondly, if a person says He/she is a Christian, **but continues to live in sin,** the result will be the same, even though his doctrinal theories may coincide with the true teachings of the Word. This is why the doctrine that says once you are saved, Jesus saves you from all ALL-OF your sins; [past, present, and future], is not Biblical, because if that was the case, then the people mentioned above, who are **still living in their sins (like liars and homosexuals) would be allowed into heaven,** and we know that is NOT the case. **WITHOUT REPENTANCE, NO-ONE SHALL SEE GOD!**

Yes, disobedience to revealed truth, as well as incorrect doctrine, keeps one from the presence of God for all eternity. This is why Titus 1:16 states: *They profess that they know God* [lip service]; *but in works* [daily living], *they deny* [God], *being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate* [counterfeit].

Therefore, the members of both groups remain on earth, when Jesus calls His "genuine" children home, in the twinkling of an eye. Then, these leftovers from all denominations, become members of the only religious body left in existence ~ the world church, under the false prophet. Looking a verse 4 again, we notice that the woman, or mother of the united world church is clothed in materials of *purple and scarlet-colour*. This signifies rulership, (for Imperial Rome bedecked it leaders in in such fashionable elegance). Strange is it not, that ecclesiastical rulers have always desired temporal authority. They have sort to control the world, as well as their parishioners.

Constantine, who became Emperor of Rome in 312 A.D., and eventually head of the church, is a perfect example of this power struggle, which has continued to the present hour. **Shade of Nicolaitanism! Remember, the church of Ephesus in Rev. chapter 2.**

Question: Is such a goal scriptural" NO!!! Jesus taught His disciples to pray, *THY kingdom come*, (Matthew 6:10). When this great event takes place in Rev. 19:16, then, and only then, is a theocracy ~ the government of God ~ established upon the earth.

This position of leadership is reserved for the Lord Jesus Christ (only), and no mortal has any business trying to take His place. This throne belongs exclusively to the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

The colours and the jewels of Rev. 17:4, picture a church composed of prelates, or leader, elegantly dressed in purple and scarlet (the colours of the emperors from the time of Constantine). They are also decked with gold and precious stones and pearls (a picture of wealth) and use idols in worship (pictured by the golden cup in the woman's hand). The cup is full of (1) Abominations, and (2) filthiness. NEITHER OF THESE TWO THINGS GIVE GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

V 5. And upon her forehead was the name written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Here we discover that the "mother church" has daughters. Her offspring are groups who either rejected the true teachings of the founder of Christendom, or who had a counterfeit experience with the Son of God. **"They went through the motions, but were never truly converted"**. Among them are cultists, apostates, and unconverted professors of religion ~ including Baptists, Catholics, Lutherans, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, and those who were member of a host of "other denominations". They never really knew the Lord (Matthew 7:21-23). They never had a "personal relationship" with Him.

The fruit of their daily living was spoiled. Now they are all united in one homogenised ecumenical monstrosity ~ the counterfeit church, under the leadership of the false prophet, worshipping another god. However, the true believers, from many denominations are already on the glory side of heaven, being evacuated from the earth at the Rapture, the catching away (Rev. 4:1).

At the Judgement Day, no church ~ not even YOUR CHURCH, will be the final standard of truth. Neither will tradition hold sway at the judgement bar of God. The only and absolute authority of truth, faith, and religious practise is God's Holy Word (2 Timothy 3:16)! This is why the Lord Jesus Himself said in Mark 7:7, 13: *Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Making the Word of God of non effect through your traditions. Which you have delivered.*

V 6. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

As Apostle John watches all-of the cunning antics of persecution this woman used and uses, *he* [wonders] *with great admiration.* This DOES NOT MEAN that he admires the woman who has so mercilessly destroyed so many. Instead, the original Greek is that John "wonders with great wonder ~ he is puzzled, he is mystified".

V 7. And the angel said unto me; Wherefore did thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carried her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

The explanation now begins in verse 8.

V 8. The beast that thou saw was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

The angel continues unfolding the mystery of the beast in verses 8 through 17. Then, in verse 18, the identity of the woman is revealed. Concerning the beast, the, angel declares; *The beast that that thou saw was [past tense], and is not [present tense]; and shall ascend [future tense] out of the bottomless pit.* This is the same beast found in Rev. 17:3, and also in Rev. 13:1.

The reason the beast *was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition* is that, as mentioned in the study of Rev. 13:3, he is more than likely assassinated during the Tribulation Hour, and therefore *is not.*

Then Satan, the great imitator, resurrects him and enters his body of this human, for the final 42 months of the Tribulation. This explanation also fulfills the statement *and yet is* (Rev. 17:8). While he is deceased, the beast is in the place of departed evil spirits ~ the bottomless pit. At the time of his resurrection, he ascends out of the pit, only to eventually go back into perdition at the conclusion of his reign, when Christ comes (at the Battle of Armageddon) and casts him into *the lake of fire* (Rev. 19:20).

Verse 8 also tells us that those persons whose names *are NOT written in the book of life,* are emotionally stirred as they see the beast *that was* [alive], *and is not,* [because of his assassination] *and yet is* [because of his resurrection] ruling again.

V 9. And here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits.

This is a great prophetic text! It reveals the exact location, geographically, of the final world power block, and headquarters for the world church as well. Historically speaking, Rome is the only city built upon seven hills. The names of her peaks are (1) Aventine, (2) Caelian, (3) Capitoline, (4) Esquiline, (5) Palatine, (6) Quirinal, and (7) Viminal. There is no disputing this fact. The worldly church, sitting upon these 7 hills, heading up scores of denominations, rides to power on the back of the ten-horned western federation of nations.

V 10. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he comes, he must continue for a short space.

As John receives this vision of the seven kings, five have already fallen. They were: (1) Assyria, (2) Egypt, (3) Babylon, (4) Medo-Persia, (5) Greece, (6) Rome, at this time that John receives this vision, (7) is yet to come. He is of course the Antichrist, whose reign will last briefly, or *a short space.*

(Please Note: Kings 1-5 were defeated in war. Rome was not defeated; it was destroyed by internal moral and corrupt practices.)

V 11. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eight, and is of the seventh, and goes into perdition.

The verse is a "thought-twister"., but easily understood when you consider it very carefully.

Who is king number 8 ~ if there are only 7 kings in the first place? King #8 is king #7 resurrected! *And the beast that was* [before his assassination], *and is not,* [because of his untimely death], *even he is* [because of his resurrection] *the eighth.* He is *"of the seven"* because Satan, who incarnated his body while dead, also motivated the other seven.

As further proof that number 8 is the resurrected Antichrist (number seven), we are again told that he will eventually go into perdition. This statement is also made concerning number seven in Rev. 17:8, as well as in our text (verse 11). King number 7 and king number 8 are the same.

V 12. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings, which have no kingdoms as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

The ten horns have now become quite familiar to us. They may soon control the whole world. Communism, as we have leant, is NOT the final power block of history: Rather this ten-toed western alliance is! The power of these nations will be short-lived ~ for one hour, or for but a short period of time.

V 13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength to the beast.

The final 10-nation western federation ~ after the Antichrist ousts three of the original members, and replaces them with 2 nations of his choosing, becomes so united, that everything they possess, economically & militarily, is placed in the control of this world leader (Daniel 7:8,24).

V 14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: fore He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

This verse is fulfilled in Rev. 19:11-16, when the world armies gather together against the Lord and His anointed, as pictured in Psalm 2:2, which says: *The kings of the earth set themselves,*

and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, The Lamb (Christ) is the *Lord of lords, and King of kings.*

The called, the chosen, and the faithful (the 3 attributes to be chosen by Jesus to be part of His Bride), who accompany Him are the armies of heaven, (Rev. 19:14), composed of the believers (His True Church) who were Raptured out of the world in Rev. 4:1, and who have waited in heaven for seven years, to return with The Bridegroom.

V 15. And He says unto me, the waters which you saw, where the whore sits, are the peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

As already explained for Rev. 17:1, the woman sitting upon many waters is the worldly church, who exercises religious control over mankind internationally.

V 16. And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

The Antichrist eventually betrays his religious followers! They bowed and scraped to his image, but he no longer wants to "share the limelight and glory with them." Thus, the individual leaders of the countries of the 10-nation confederacy turn against the worldly church. They hate her, strip her of all-of her possessions (the gold, precious stones, and pearls of Rev. 17:4), and destroy here by burning her remains to the ground. Who places such a plan of action in the hearts of these rulers? None other than God Almighty Himself! He hates a "worldly church!"

V 17. For God has put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

Imagine, God does it all! The Government is upon His shoulders! This portion of scripture emphasises the utter futility of politics. Despite the methods and manipulations of man, God's plans are perfect and always come to pass. He sets up and He knocks down world rulers at will (Psalm 75:7). They are even pawns in the game of life (Proverbs 21:1). God's will comes to pass, regardless of what mankind attempts to do. Christian, get, souls saved! This is our God-given goal. Let the world spend time on temporal issues. The cause for Christ is eternal!

V 18. And the woman which you saw is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

This great end-time city is located within the European Union and proves that the political and religious power brokers exist together simultaneously. Since the world church forms at the time when ten western nations unite~ and both the European Economics Community and World Council of Churches began unity proceedings in 1948 (the same year than Israel was re-created as a Nation). Christ's coming is near! How long, O Lord, shall we shout that glad song? "Christ returns, Hallelujah!" Yes, "Hallelujah!" Amen! [Let it be so!]

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: POLITICAL BABYLON DESTROYED

Chapter 18 describes the destruction of Political (or economic) Babylon. As we saw in chapter 17 "Mystery Babylon" (Religious Babylon ~ the worldly church) was described as a woman, whereas commercial Babylon (or political Babylon) is referred to as "Babylon the great", and is depicted in the scriptures, as a *great city, or mighty city*, and eventually, as a burning city.

Religious Babylon was identified as "situated on seven hills", whereas Political Babylon is visible from the sea".

Religious Babylon was destroyed by the kings of the earth (Rev. 17:16), whereas Political Babylon will be destroyed by horrendous judgements from God Almighty Himself. When Religious Babylon was destroyed, the kings of the earth rejoiced; however, when Political Babylon is destroyed, these same kings and the merchants *weep and lament for her.*

V 1. And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

John says *after these things.* After what things? After the fulfilment of Religious Babylon's destruction. John's statement is further proof of the two Babylons, (also described in Daniel) are

completely different and distinct from one another. Only after the events described in Chapter 17 does John see God's judgement events unfolding in this chapter upon Political Babylon.

The angel bringing the warning of impending judgement is powerful and glorious, and His appearance lightens the entire globe. This is a clear picture of the Angel of the Lord, the Christophany, the appearance of Christ in His spiritual form, as He is *the Light of the World* (John 8:12).

V 2. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become a habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hateful bird.

God's judgement of commercial/political Babylon has begun! The angel's cry is. *Babylon the great, is fallen, is fallen*. Why? She has *become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every* [evil] *spirit imaginable.* She is a cage containing every vicious, filthy, and hateful bird in existence.

Take a walk through any major city in any of the western nations today, and you see them loaded with lust-ridden sinners, seeking sex thrills through prostitutes, R & X rated movies or videos, or pornographic bookstores. Any of our western nations could easily fit the description of Political Babylon, as a *cage* [containing] *every unclean and hateful bird*, all controlled by foul evil spirits and demons, who inhabit the land and its people. Pray that each and every nation has a good, old fashioned, Holy Spirit-empowered revival; otherwise, God's judgement may soon fall upon us!

V 3. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

Just like Religious Babylon, this political system has turned to idolatry and fornication. As we saw in chapter 17, these terms refer to the worship of strange gods and a love of this world's material goods. Seeking prestige and power, Commercial/Political Babylon has promoted ungodly world alliances. The text states that the nations of the earth have partaken *of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed* [spiritual] *fornication with her* for gain (for profit). Hence the merchants of the earth have become millionaires, or billionaires by "wheeling and dealing" with this nation who is super-abundantly loaded with *delicacies.*

V 4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying; Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues.

V 5. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

The believers of the Tribulation Hour ~ those who trusted in the shed blood of the Lamb and refused the mark of the Beast, are told to *come out of her* [and partake not] *of her* [evil deeds]. They are to live holy lives in-the-midst-of *a cage* [full of] *unclean and hateful birds whose sins have reached unto heaven* and caused an abominable stench in the nostrils of the Almighty. They are to be careful of materialism, and to refrain from illegal gain, through the love of the delicacies of this world.

V 6. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she has filled to her double.

V 7. How much she has glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she says in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorry.

Here we see God's law of sowing & reaping coming into effect, in a real way: *They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same* [harvest] (Job 4:8). Humanity cannot get away with sin forever! There has to be accountability, because God hates sin! It is so inconsistent with His holiness. Except for God's mercy, most of us would have been dead and in hell a long time ago. His grace, however, passes all human understanding. *The Lord is …. Longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish,* ***but that all should come to REPENTANCE*** *(2 Peter 3:9).*

Still, God Almighty cannot tolerate sin forever, and the reaping of the political Babylon's iniquity must finally take place. ***YOU CAN'T RUN WITH THE DEVIL AND WALK IN THE PROMISED LAND!***

What a terrible experience as Babylon receives a double portion of judgement! Literally the verse should say; "The double is to be doubled. "This was the punishment under the Law of Moses", (Exodus 22:4,7). Now God says, "Double the judgement upon Babylon according to her works. Reward her even as she rewarded you." Babylon has glorified herself and lived deliciously. Her wealthy became wealthier, and her poor became poorer. As a nation, she did not care about the poor, for she said; "I am queen. I shall see no sorrow. I do not want to look at the needs of the impoverished."

This punishment is a warning to all nation on the earth that fails to look after is poor and needy!

Look at how James predicted this event in James 5:1-6; which corresponds to the judgements administered in Rev. 18:1,7: Go to now, you rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. You have heaped treasures together for the last days. Behold, the hire of your labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cries; and the cries of them which have reaped [the poor] are entered in the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

You have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; you have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned and killed the just; and he does not resist you.

The end of the age will not see communism enthroned. Instead, capitalism will be the ruling power as ten western nations rob and bleed the world's inhabitants of their possessions. Now, do not misunderstand me, I hate the atheistic, godless monstrosity called communism". It will be destroyed, as will Russia, in the Middle East, (Ezekiel 39:1-2). However, "double trouble" will come upon those nations that are exploiters of the masses. ~ the rich who starve the poor ~ according to the verse just investigated. Their judgement takes place as Babylon (the 10 nations) is burned.

V 8. Therefore, shall her plagues come in one day; death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

V 9. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.

V 10. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying; Alas, alas, the great Babylon; that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgement come.

When the news of Babylon's destruction is received, earth's kings, monarchs, potentates, and presidents immediately begin to weep. Their source of wealth has not just dried up ~ but has been disintegrated! They are joined by the members of the Chamber of Commerce.

V 11. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buys their merchandise anymore.

Let's view the commodities. Not a single item is really necessary. In fact, the entire display maybe classified as "luxurious worldly baubles, used to impress high society." Imagine, even the mark of the beast won't hinder wealth in the western world! Just look at the expensive dainties in the following scriptures.

V 12. The merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and pearls, [for investment portfolios], and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet [for fashionable dresses], and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble [for high class furniture].

V 13. And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense [for sensuousness, Also, a stockpile of] wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, [for the satisfying of the flesh], and [finally, the] souls of men [for lust and other demeaning practices].

But judgement must come. The treasures of Tribulation enterprises do not last. [Satan may promise great riches ~ but he never promises that you can keep them!] Neither will they last for you, if this is all that you want out of life. Why?

V 14. And the fruits that your soul lusted after are departed from you, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from you; and you shall find them no more at all.

They will all be destroyed in one hour (verses 10 & 17). You will be a millionaire one minute & a beggar the next!

V 15. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her. Shall stand afar off for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

V 16. And saying; Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls!

V 17. For in one hour, so great riches come to nothing. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off.

V 18. And cried when the saw the smoke of her burning, saying; What city is like unto this great city!

V 19. And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying; alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the seas by reason of her costliness! For in on hour is she made desolate.

The preceding texts are self-explanatory. As the whole world weeps over the destruction of political Babylon, all-of heaven breaks forth in praise!!!

V 20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and you apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her.

Up until this point, there has only been one other command to rejoice in heaven recorded in the Book of Revelation. Up until this point in time, everything has been solemn and sad.

At the overthrow of Babylon, the Cherubim, Seraphim, and other angelic orders are told to praise the Lord. The holy apostles and prophets ~ representatives of all the Old Testament & New Testament saints ~ are instructed to join them. Why? The chief enemy of the people has been destroyed.

The world persecuted the prophets, apostles, and the saints of God, during every age. Oftentimes, great suffering was inflicted upon them: [Some] *were tortured, not accepting deliverance: that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yes, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment : They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves, of the earth* (Hebrews 11:35-38).Now such oppression is finished for ever! *Babylon is fallen ... is fallen.*

Praise the Lord! The world can no longer touch God's people *for God has avenged you on her*~ or from the Greek, which is stronger; "God has judged your judgement on her.

V 21. And a mighty angel took up a stone, like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying; Thus, with violence shall that great city of Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

Most Bible Scholars identify this stone as Christ. Acts 4:11 states: [Christ] *is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which has become the head of the corner.* The stone strikes at the end time, when the ten toes, or the ten western nations are aligned. Daniel 2:34 states: *Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet* [composed of ten toes] *that were of iron and clay, and brake them into pieces.*

The explanation is again confirmed in Daniel 2:44-45: *And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all-of these kingdoms. And it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation therefore sure.* The Lord Jesus Christ may well be the stone that pulverises Babylon. So thorough is the stone's destruction that Babylon is finished forever!

V 22. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee: and no craftsman, or whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee: and the sound of millstone, shall be heard no more at all in thee.

Entertainment ceases in the "laugh-a-minute" commercial empire. All music and hilarity is forever silenced. The craftsmen~ including tool and die-makers, auto mechanics, and machinists, are put out of business, as all production is halted in Babylon, once the international centre of commerce.

V 23. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee: and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: For thy merchants were the great men of the earth: for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

Light is extinguished, possibly through energy deficiencies. Marriages cease, and heartbreak inundates the land. No longer is there time for merriment, joy, love, and romance.

V 24. And in here was found the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and all-of that were slain upon the earth.

The closing verses of this chapter reveal three reasons for God's judgement and annihilation of Babylon:

(1) Her love for wealth and riches ~ [her] *merchants were the great men of the earth;*

(2) Her abusive use of drugs~ *for by* [her] *sorceries were all nations deceived.* (Again, we remind the reader that the word sorceries in this text again comes from the Greek word Pharmakeia, translated Pharmacy in English. The term means, "getting high on" or "getting a kick out of" drugs.); and

(3) Her hatred, abuse, and persecution of the people of God ~for *in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

Who is Babylon? Some scholars think that this refers to ancient Babylon, on the banks of the Euphrates River in present-day Iraq. The city is presently being rebuilt. Other scholars believe that Great Babylon is the United States, or America ~ a leader of the western world aligned with the Antichrist's ten-toed kingdom.

Other scholars believe that America and *Babylon the great* are one and the same, because of the information presented in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, plus the words of John the seer in Revelation chapter 18.

Consider the following: Isaiah 18:1-2 depicts a latter-day Babylon that amazingly resembles modern-day America. This nation (1) has its insignia of wings ~ similar to the USA's national emblem, the bald eagle; (2) is a land that is beyond the sea from Israel; (3) is scattered and peeled ~ meaning it is widely spread out, or has great land areas: (4) is meted out, or staked out, by acres and miles; and (5) Is a land whose rivers are spoiled ~ or polluted.

Likewise in chapters 50 & 51 of Jeremiah he presents conclusive evidence that the latter-day Babylon, is far different from and superior to, ancient Babylon~ will spring into existence. As one studies Jeremiah's remarks, he is amazed to see that the modern-day America seems to be the fulfilment of these predictions because: (1) She is a nation of *mingled people* (Jeremiah 50:37); (2) She is a nation *whose mother shall be sorely confounded* and who coexists with the mother at the hour of her decline (Jeremiah 50:12); (3) *she swells upon many waters* (Jeremiah 51:13); (4) her wealth plagues the nations of the earth to insane jealousy (Jeremiah 51:7);

(5) Her exploits in space are so utterly fantastic that she tries *to mount up to heaven* (Jeremiah 51:33); and (6) she exists when Israel is back in her land.

CHAPTER NINETEEN: THE KING IS COMING!!!

This chapter is really exciting because it begins with the angels singing the Alleluia chorus, and this is the Hebrew word meaning, "***PRAISE JEHOVAH,"*** *or* ***"PRAISE THE LORD."***

This is the ONLY chapter in the New Testament where this word is mentioned and it appears four different times in the first 6 verses of this chapter.

V 1. And after these things, I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia: Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God:

Johns says: *after these things.* After what things? After the destruction of religious and political Babylon. Then what? Then John hears a mighty praise and worship testimony meeting in heaven. This is probably led by the martyred saints of the Tribulation hour (Rev. 7:9). This group will also include all-of the redeemed in glory. They are rejoicing because;

(1) Evil has run its course and been defeated;
(2) Then Tribulation hour is concluding;
(3) Christ is preparing to return with His saints;
(4) The armies of the world are about to be demolished ~ not just defeated;
(5) Swords with then be made into plough shears, and spears into pruning hooks;
(6) Christ will soon establish His Millennium kingdom upon the earth.

Such "good news" would make anyone shout; "Amen, Praise the Lord!" The reason this praise is directed to the ONE whose attributes are; (1) Salvation; (2) glory, (3) Honour, (4) power is revealed in the next verse.

V 2. For true and righteous are his judgements; for He has judged the great whore, which did corrupt the (whole) earth with her fornications, and has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

V 3. And again, they said: Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever.

The glory refrain is repeated as God's people acknowledge the fact that Babylon's doom is eternal. Never again will religious or political alliances bring men into bondage. Never again will mankind be duped, deluded, and destroyed, through pompous ceremonialism. NO! Babylon's smoke ascends up for the ages of ages ~ forever and forever!

V 4. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat upon the throne saying: Amen; Alleluia ~ Meaning "let it be so, Praise the Lord!"

At this point, the twenty-four elders, (the same elders we saw casting their trophies and/or crowns at the feet of Jesus), following the Rapture and the Judgement Seat of Christ in Rev. chapter 4, now join in the praise session.

The world system that so harassed and persecuted them has finally been defeated and judged. The four beasts (identified as cherubim and seraphim in chapter 4,) also lend their voices in glorifying God. They are rejoicing over the fact that they did not follow Lucifer, the head angel, as many of their group did, when he rebelled against the Almighty God (Isaiah 14:12-14). Now they are eternally secure, whereas the "fallen angels" are everlastingly damned.

V 5. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great.

This voice is undoubtedly an angel encouraging the heavenly host to continue the praise session. He is the celestial cheerleader at one of heaven's most momentous and climatic hours.

V 6. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying: Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns.

This is the final chorus, as all-of heaven joins together in the song. The multitudinous voices resound so loudly that the roar is likened *to the sound of many waters,* and *mighty thunderings.* Why not? The prayers of the ages; *Thy kingdom come,* uttered by millions upon millions throughout the centuries, is about to be answered. Thus, the exclamation: *Alleluia* [Praise Jehovah] *for the Lord God Omnipotent* [very soon] *reigns.*

V 7. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready.

V 8. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

At the hour of Christ's return to earth with His Bride (HIS CHURCH), His honeymoon is launched for 1,000 years. These verses are further proof that the Rapture is a "pre-Tribulation event". The marriage ceremony takes place in heaven, in full view of all-of the angelic beings, not on earth. The bride prepares herself at the Judgement Seat of Christ (which also takes place in heaven) before the wedding. These are time-consuming events. Then she returns with her lover ~ the Lord Jesus Christ ~ from Heaven back to the earth.

We know that Our Saviour is "the bridegroom", because He is *the Lamb of God* [who] *takes away the sins of the world* (John 1:29). The marriage partners at this glorious event include the Lamb (Christ), and His Bride (HIS CHURCH). Where have they been during the time depicted in chapters 6 through 18? In Heaven! This confirms that HIS CHURCH was raptured in Rev. 4:1, and has not been mentioned again until now! Christ has had HIS CHURCH, (His betrothed), in heaven under His protection, while the judgement of the earth took place. The time of preparation for the wedding is now.

During the seven years that the remaining earth dwellers suffered judgement from heaven, the bride was being investigated in heaven. One would think that if you have been chosen by Jesus at the Rapture, that would be enough, but that is not the case! 2 Corinthians 5:10 states: *We must all appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ:* [so] *that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it is good or bad.* 2 Corinthians 11:2 continues: *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste* [pure] *virgin to Christ.* For many who were unfaithful to Christ during the Betrothal (Engagement) period (that is, their years of service upon the earth) this will be a time of humiliation (1 John 2:28).

Since we are "betrothed" (or engaged) to Christ from the time of our conversion, until the moment of the Rapture, God commands that we live Holy lives, consistently (1 Peter 1:16). That is why Holiness is so important. **Without repentance no-one shall see God.** Then, immediately after we are called Home (in the twinkling of an eye), the pre-marital examination, concerning our faithfulness as His sweetheart, begins. The signs of the times definitely indicate that this event is getting very near. Our next appointment has been scheduled. How heartbreaking the report, if the bridegroom says, "I have discovered a problem". Children of God, don't be among the losers ~ be holy & live victoriously!

In preparation for the marriage ceremony itself, every believer will be attired in the wedding garment he made upon the earth. The material for this garment will be composed of "the good works" remaining, after the Judgement Seat has occurred. But doesn't the Bible teach that "believers are clothed in the righteousness of Christ?" Definitely! (2 Corinthians 5:21). This is how one becomes a Christian in the first place.

However, the word *righteousness* in the original Greek used in verse 8 **is not singular** ~ (righteousness based upon Christ's work) but **plural,** ~ (righteousnesses, based upon the believer's life and his/her deeds upon the earth).

At *the Judgement Seat of Christ* (2 Corinthians 5:10), every work, both good or bad, will be investigated. Then those works will be placed in the fire of testing (1 Corinthians 3:13).

At that time, *if any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss* [of rewards]: *but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire* [by the skin of his teeth] (1 Corinthians 3:14-15).

These two texts just referenced describe the preparation of the Bride of Christ (All Christians in heaven) for the wedding (the marriage of the Lamb). It is clear that the wedding gown is composed of the Believer's righteousnesses (good works) performed on earth in honour of the lover of her soul. When this great moment arrives ~ undoubtedly very soon (maybe sooner than you think) ~ what will you have as material for your wedding garment? What will your wedding picture look like? Therefore, I plead with you to live a holy life for Christ. Give Him your very best, and all that you have. If you do, then your rewards will be great, your joy will be complete, and your heavenly entrance abundant (I Peter 1:11).

V 9. And He said unto me; Write, Blessed are they which are called into the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. And he said unto me; These are the true sayings of God.

This verse clearly indicates that there is not only a wedding ceremony, but like here on earth, the marriage ceremony is followed by a Marriage Supper (or Marriage Feast). This reception will include many guests. Remember that at a Wedding Feast, the Bride and the Bridegroom are the "guests of honour", they are not the guests.

The Bride and the Bridegroom are the ones that the reception is prepared for. So, the $64 question then is "Who are the invited guests"? Who are invited to attend the Marriage Supper of the Lamb? The guests include: All believers up to Pentecost, as well as the Tribulation saints. John, the disciple that Jesus loved (John 19:26) and the one who wrote the Book of Revelation, said, *He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the "friend of the bridegroom", which stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy is fulfilled* (John 3:29). No wonder our text states: *Blessed* [or happy] *are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.*

The bride is composed of all believers who become members of the Body of Christ from the day of Pentecost until the Rapture. Now we find that the guests are those who trusted the Lord either prior to Pentecost, or following the Rapture. Since the marriage takes place in Heaven, and the Old Testament and Tribulation believers are part of the earthly group, their only hope of attending this Marriage Supper is that the event takes place on the earth. This is exactly what happens.

The fact that the marriage takes place in heaven and the supper occurs on earth is beautifully portrayed in the parable of the ten virgins: *Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no* [extra] *oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight, there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom comes; go out to meet him. Then all-of those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise; Give us of your oil: for our lamps have gone out. But the wise answered, saying: Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins* [who had gone off to buy oil] *saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for you know neither the day, nor the hour wherein The Son of man comes* (Matthew 25:113).

On the earth, (in worldly weddings) much attention is given to The Bride, at the wedding ceremony, and in many cases, the groom is just there to make up to numbers. The scripture tells us that *Marriage is a holy estate between a man and a woman*, with the priority being man first, and then woman. Notice also here on earth, there are two different ways we hold the wedding ceremony.

In the Eastern culture, the groom comes to the betrothed's house to collect His betrothed, and arrange for her to be taken to the wedding ceremony. In the western culture, the groom waits for the bride at the church, where the wedding ceremony is to take place, hoping that she will

turn up! Here again Satan has subtly taken glory away from God, by how we celebrate this Holy estate.

Notice that Rev. 19:6 states: ***Behold, the bridegroom comes; go ye to meet him.*** The reason the emphasis on The Bridegroom, instead of the bride, is because the Lord Jesus Christ is all in all. Even John says; *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come* (Rev. 19:7). Believers ~ members of the bride ~ we ought to remember, that the glory is His. He redeemed us! We would be nothing without the salvation blood of Jesus! These texts then, explain the marriage, the supper, the guests, and the locations.

V 10. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unt me; See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

If there were any portion of the Book of Revelation, that John would like to omit, this would be the verse. He has just done a foolish thing. He allowed himself to become so enamoured with the angel delivering the message, that he began worshipping a created being. Such recording of human weakness proves the God wrote the Bible, for man would have omitted his mistakes. God, however, records them in order to show the world that *all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23).

As John bows his knee to the created being, the angel cries out; "Don't do it. Angels are but *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation* (Hebrews 1:14). Get up! I am only a servant of God, as you are."

John had just learnt an important lesson. Have you? Beware of any religious denomination that honours or reveres angels ~ including the angel of Moroni of Mormonism. Such reverence is wrong! *Let no man beguile you of your reward in … worshipping of angels* (Colossians 2:18). Even the angel's command in the text says: "Worship God." (And He alone shall you worship!) Thus, it is obvious that we are not to worship men, women, angels, or idols, (Exodus 20:4-5). Worship God only!

V 11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat upon Him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he does judge and make war.

V 12. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

V 13. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name called The Word of God.

V 14. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

V 15. And out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

V 16. And he has on his vesture and on his thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

These verses graphically picture the coming of Christ to earth. This event is called "The Revelation" among theologians, because this is the moment when the Lord reveals Himself in all-of His glory to the inhabitants of the earth. The same scene was observed in Rev. 11:15, as well. Remember the events in Chapters 12 through 19 simply repeat the events happening in chapter 6 through 11 in more detail.

For 120 years the people were scoffing Noah; "Where is this rain, you have been saying is coming?" When it came it was too late for them! Here again, for many centuries the world has been scoffing; *Where is the promise of his coming?* (2 Peter 3:4). NOW, the mocking abruptly ceases. Why? Breathtaking signs accompany the One who sits on his white horse ~ as He comes to judge and make war on the world: *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her* [reflected] *light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the*

Son of man in heaven: and then shall all-of the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Ans he shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect [saved Jews and Tribulation saints] *from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.* Matthew (24:29-32).

The scene described before us is a literal event, because John sees heaven opened. Heaven's door is opened but twice in the Book of Revelation ~ once in Rev. 4:1, and now in Rev. 19:11. This is thrilling, because John gets to see both of them, and records the event both times!

Chapter 4 pictures **the Rapture**: chapter 19 pictures **the Revelation**. The door is opened in chapter 4, to "receive the saved"; now the door is opened again in order that the saints may return to earth with the Rider on the white horse, who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Don't let anyone fool you by telling you that there is only one "appearing" at Christ's return. Two opened doors tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!

The rider in Rev. 19:12 has *eyes ... as a flame of fire,* which are piercing and purging. He can immediately see through the sham and hypocrisy of men. These are the same eyes we viewed in Rev. 1:14. As King, Jesus Christ has on His head the crowns of royalty. He also has a special name that will be exposed at the hour of His return. Until then, He alone knows this name and its meaning.

In Rev. 19:13, we see that the Lord wears *a vesture dipped in blood*, a picture of the judgement He is bringing to earth. None can doubt that this judge is the Lord Jesus Christ, for His name is called the Word of God. John often called Jesus by this name. In fact, He is the only New Testament writer to use this title.

John 1:1 state; *In the beginning was the Word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God.* John 1:14 adds *And the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us.* He again calls Christ the *Word of life* in 1 John 1:1.

At this moment, John sees the *Word of God* coming in judgement. He also sees a great army called *the armies of heaven* following Him upon white horses. Notice that they come from heaven: they are not already present on earth. They are the saints who were Raptured in Rev. 4:1 ~ the bride who *made herself ready and* [wore] *fine linen, clean and white* in Rev. 19:8.

Tens of thousands, yes even millions upon millions in number ~ avoided the Tribulation Hour and are now returning with the King of kings for the conflict at Armageddon. Just imagine how big the stables must be in heaven, to house all-of those millions upon millions of horses.

The returning saints are privileged to stand with Him as He comes *to execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him* (Jude 15).

The time of reaping has arrived!

As Christ returns to subjugate the earth dwellers, He does so with the sword in His mouth (Rev. 19:15). This sword is nothing less that the Word of God. His Word always smites men in their consciences and lives. This is exactly what happened to the officers of the chief priests, and the Pharisees when they came to arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. *As soon then as He said unto them, I AM he, they went backward, and fell to the ground* (John 18:6). *Oh, the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword* (Hebrews 4:12).

We note in Rev. 19:15, **that it is Christ and His Word alone**, that smashes the nations who come to the Battle of Armageddon. The armies of heaven only observe the battle, as He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. **This moment is significant, because it fulfills the prophecy of Daniel 2:34,** that *a stone ... cut out without hands* pulverises the image ~ the ten-nation confederacy. Then the stone immediately expands and fills the whole earth, with a new kingdom, never to be destroyed. Its leader is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. **THE KING HAS COME! OH, HALLELUJAH! THE KING HAS COME!**

V 17. And I saw and angel standing in the sun: and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in-the-midst-of heaven; Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God.

V 18. That you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

The devastating scenes described in Rev. 19:17-18, is the result of the destruction bestowed by Jesus (alone) at the Battle of Armageddon, (Rev. 16:16) fought in the valleys of Megiddo and Jehoshaphat, NOT Russia's invasion of Israel, described in Ezekiel chapters 38 & 39. Russia makes its move against Israel in the middle of the Tribulation Hour. Why did Russia make this move? The Antichrist comes to power, and makes a Peace Pact with the Nations of the earth, (which He has no intention of honouring). Remember, the Antichrist, is operating under the power and the dominance of the Dragon (Satan, who is the "Master Deceiver", and the "Father of all lies").

In the Middle of the Tribulation Hour, Satan (through the Antichrist) breaks this peace pact, as was prophesied in Daniel 9:27. At this point, Russia invades the Holy Land, for she went *up to the land of unwalled villages;* [saying] *I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely* (Ezekiel 38:11).

Prior to the appearance of the Antichrist in Rev. chapter 13, the nation of Israel is not at rest, or dwelling safely; there is constant conflict, both from bordering nations, and also internally from Israeli Arabs, conducting terrorist attacks within Israel, against the Jewish people.

This situation changes when the Antichrist comes to power, takes control, and initiates his false peace plan. Then all-of Israel and all-of the world proclaim, "Peace, peace" ~ **BUT IT DOES NOT LAST!** *For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction [comes] upon them* (1 Thessalonians 5:3). Russia quickly takes advantage of the opportunity and moves to attack Israel, *for she is at rest, dwelling safely*. Moscow's act of aggression, proves to be her "Waterloo", for she is destroyed on the Israel/Lebanese/Syrian borders and 5/6th of her entire army is destroyed, one of the greatest defeats in world history, **by the hand of God.** (Ezekiel 39:1-3).

The battle described in Revelation chapter 19, describes the events as God destroys the Antichrist and his ten-horned empire. The following passages vividly describe (in advance) the terrible, catastrophic judgements, which occurs in preparation for, and the fulfillment of the Battle of Armageddon.

(Joel 3:1,2,11-17) says; *For behold in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem. I will also gather all nations, and bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there, for my people and for mine inheritance Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted*[11] *my land. Assemble yourselves, and come, all you heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat: for there I will sit to judge all the heathen [nations] round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down, for the [wine] press is full, the vats overflow: for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the "Day of the Lord" is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord shall also roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem: and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall you know that I AM the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion; my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem by holy, and there shall be no strangers pass through her anymore.* [only God believers and saints shall be resident here ~ not anyone from any other religion or belief]!

Rev. 14:14-20, and Rev. 16:17-21, already studied, also have to do with the Battle of Armageddon. Therefore, before the Marriage Supper of the Lamb can take place, the lands and the remaining peoples must be cleansed, and the "Supper of the Great God" occurs.

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[11] Refer to Appendix 1: Restoring the Bible Boundaries of Israel.

This event occurs when the angel summons all-of the fowls (vultures) of heaven to gather for a feast; *For wheresoever the carcase is, there the eagles will be gathered together* (Matthew 24:28). At this gathering, they eat the flesh of the deceased kings, captains, mighty men of valour, horses, their riders, and all men from every rank and position in life. What a horrible nightmare, as men suffer the consequences of their rebellion against God.

Finally, the one who made life so miserable upon the earth, who gave men the number 666, who would not let them buy or sell, without the number of his name, and who had millions of believers beheaded, because they refused his number, is judged by God himself!

V 19. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

V 20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image; These both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

What a conclusion! Two world leaders ~ one political, the other religious, one falsely posing as God, the other promoting him ~ now discovering that their charade is over; *their sin paraded ever before them*, for all-of mankind to see. They are cast alive into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone ~ the final abode of all God-haters and Christ-rejecters, for time and eternity. One Thousand years later, when Satan is judged and joins them (Rev. 20:10), they are still suffering torment day and night (proving you don't die when you go to hell! ~ you suffer eternal punishment!) Oh, who is foolish enough to preach immediate disintegration, or annihilation in the light of these plain texts?

V 21. And the remnant was slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all of the fowls were filled with their flesh.

THE BATTLE HAS ENDED. NO-ONE IS SPARED!

CHAPTER TWENTY: THE MILLENNIUM REIGN OF KING JESUS

Chapter 20 introduces the image of the most beautiful, peaceful, and rewarding age that this world will ever know ~ the Millennium ~ the one-thousand-year reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, *as the KING OF KINGS: AND LORD OF LORDS. He will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem, and the government shall be upon His shoulders: and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Might God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace, there shall be no end* (Isaiah (9:6-7).

However, before beginning to study this chapter, we must first address the critics, who deny the Biblical truth of God's word.

Those people who believe and teach, that the one-thousand-year millennium reign of Jesus Christ upon the earth does not happen. Unfortunately, they are really not very good Bible Students, because there are many Bible passages which reflect the truth.

First of all; If Israel has no future, then dozens of Old Testament prophecies can be removed from the scriptures. For example, Genesis chapters 49 and Deuteronomy 33, with all-of their benedictions upon the people of Israel, because these passages of scripture guarantee them a place on the earth where they will have peace. To spiritualise the literal truths of God's Holy Word concerning Israel's future is to be wilfully blinded and deceived.

Secondly; There must be a millennium, otherwise scores of verses become hollow platitudes and also meaningless predictions. Consider the following texts, which clearly happen on the earth, not in heaven. They clearly indicate a time period and a place for them to be fulfilled on the earth, because up until 2022, these events are still in the future ~ they have not happened yet.

(Isaiah 11:6) *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb* (as all-of nation is tamed, by the direct presence of Jesus upon the earth). (Micah 4:4) *But they sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid.* (Isaiah 32:1) *Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness.*

(Daniel 2:44) *And the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed … it shall stand forever.* (Malachi 3:1) *The Lord … shall suddenly come to his temple.*

Ezekiel describes the Millennium Temple in great detail, in fact it takes the whole of chapters 40 through 48 to describe this temple, the location, its function, the function of the two priestly lines of Zadok (who ministers to God and the people), and the line of Abiathar, (who is only allowed to do priestly duties towards the people).

(Isaiah 65:21) *And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards*, and eat the fruit of them.

The Lord Jesus referred to a period of time during which these events shall occur "as a regeneration". *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you; That you which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye shall also sit also shall sit upon twelve thrones, Judging the twelve tribes of Israel* (Matthew 19:28).

Peter also declared in Acts 3:20-21; *And* [God] *shall send Jesus Christ, which was before preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

The word *restitution* used here means "a reconstitution" and is similar to the "regeneration" of Matthew 19:28. In addition, Paul stated in Ephesians 1:21, that there is an age w*hich is to come.* The same age is called *the dispensation of the fullness of* (Ephesians 1:10). In all-of these portions of scripture they point to a period of time of the rule of Christ and His people over the earth ~ not angels as the "spiritualizers" would have us believe.

Angels ruling the earth is an impossibility, *for unto the angels has He not put in subjection the world to come* (Hebrews 2:5). Instead, God has declared through Prophet Daniel; *The most High rules in the Kingdom of men* (Daniel 4:17). The title, *the Most High* [God], *or the most High* is Christ's millennium title throughout the Psalms, the Book of Daniel, and the Book of Hosea. The *most High* [God] will also bear the title *King of Israel* in that day (John 1:49).

All upon the earth will obey Him for [He] *shalt break them with a rod of iron* (Psalm 2:9). The result: *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power* (Psalm 110:3). Earth's inhabitants will love the Lord Jesus Christ so much during this kingdom age that *daily shall he be praised* (Psalm 75:15). *Yes, His name shall endure forever* (Psalm 72:17).

This centre of all-of this kingdom activity is Jerusalem, not heaven's golden shores. This is made clear in the following verses: *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion* (Psalm 2:6). *Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem* (Isaiah 2:3).

[They] *shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem* (Isaiah 27:13). *And the Redeemer shall come to Zion* (Isaiah 59:20). *The Lord shall also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem* (Joel 3:16). *Thus says the Lord … I will dwell in-the-midst-of Jerusalem* (Zechariah 8:3). *Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem* (Zechariah 8:22).

The preceding verses of scripture are proof enough. Only the spiritually blinded can deny the fact of a literal Millennium. Only the wilfully ignorant ones can claim that the teaching is based upon just one chapter of the whole Bible. This brief review has but only touched the hem of His garment concerning Millennium truths. Believe God and His divine Word, not men! Now since *mille* means "thousand" and *annum* means "years," now let us begin our study of Chapter 20, which presents the *mille annum* [Millennium], or the one-thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on this "existing" earth.

V 1. And I saw and angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

V 2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.

V 3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed for a little season.

What a victorious sign John sees ~ and angel coming from heaven with a key and a chain in his hand for the purpose of opening the bottomless pit and binding Satan for one thousand years. Some scholars believe that this angel may be Christ Himself, because He has the keys of hell and death (Rev. 1:18). This could be the case, but other scholars point out that Jesus is now already on the Earth, because He has defeated the nations at Armageddon, and there is no reference that Jesus goes back into Heaven and returns to earth a THIRD TIME.

However, the one who possess the keys often loans them to another when help is needed. Thus, the angel in Rev. 20:1, might be Michael, the archangel, who battled against Satan before when, the answer to Daniel's prayer was delayed by Satan and His demonic forces. The most important truth here is that Christ's ownership of the keys ~ which open the pit of the abyss for Satan ~ is by virtue of His completed work upon Calvary's cross. Remember His statement in Rev. 1:18: *I AM He that liveth and was dead* [Calvary]: *and, behold, I AM alive for evermore* [The Resurrection], *Amen: and have the keys to hell and death.*

The chain carried by the angel is to bind the villain of the ages ~ called *the dragon, that old serpent … the Devil, and Satan* ~ for 1,000 years. What horrid titles the evil one bears! *Dragon,* in Hebrew, pictures a hideous monster. The term *the old serpent* pictures the slithering snake, who brought ruination upon the whole human race, through his deceitful work in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-6).

Satan means "slander," for he is *the accuser of* [the] *brethren* as we learned in Rev. 12:10), and he is the father of all slanderers and gossips (John 8:44). *Devil* means "adversary" or "foe," and Satan has been a foe of Christ and His followers from the time he was kicked out of heaven until this present moment in the text. Now, at last, he is cast into the *bottomless pit,* shut up and sealed for a Millennium (Rev. 20:3).

The *bottomless pit* is not the *lake of fire* into which the beast and the false prophet were cast in Rev. 19:20. Rather, it is temporary prison where Satan in imprisoned for ten centuries (one thousand years), in order that peace, prosperity, happiness, and holiness may exist here on earth, during Christ's millennial reign. At the end of this time, Satan is *loosed* [for] *a little season*, leads one final revolt against God, and is a subsequently cast into the eternal *lake of fire … where the beast and the false prophet are [already]* (Rev. 20:10)

V 4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgement was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received the mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

John now observes thrones occupied for judgement. Who sits upon these 12 thrones? Members of the **first resurrection ~** which includes the Old Testament saints, Church-age saints, and Tribulation saints. The resurrection of the Old Testament believers is described in Daniel 12:1-2, and the resurrection of the New Testament saints in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, and in 1 Corinthians 15:15-54.

As we have seen, the resurrection of the martyred Tribulation saints undoubtedly occurs at the *glorious appearing of Christ* (Titus 2:13) when He returns to earth. Rev. 6:9-11, presented this view. At that point, these martyrs (under the throne in heaven) awaited their resurrection but were told to wait *yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed* [in the Tribulation hour] *as they were, should be fulfilled.*

Thus, we see that the thrones are occupied by resurrected believers from Adam onwards, inclusive of the Tribulation martyrs. Each has been a participant in the first resurrection. These saints are entitled to sit upon thrones because they are all members of the *royal priesthood* (1 Peter 2:9). Christ has made them *kings and priests* (Rev. 5:10).

V 5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

The closing sentence of Verse 5, *this is the first resurrection.* Should have been the concluding sentence of verse 4 above. The transition from verse 4 to verse 5 would then read: *And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.* [This is the first resurrection.] *But the rest of the dead* [those who rejected Christ], *lived not again until the thousand years were finished.* This clarifies the issue The dead of verse 5 ~ raised a thousand years later ~ could not be part of the first resurrection (those of verse 4). This is because they are not holy, and therefore cannot be priests, as described in verse 6.

V 6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Since the remaining dead come forth one thousand years later, we immediately understand that they cannot be part of the first resurrection. Those who are part of the first resurrection reign with Christ during the Millennium, while the members of this group (the unbelievers) remain in their graves. They, in turn are raised for the Great White Throne Judgement AFTER the 1,000 years.

V 7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out his prison.

V 8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

Satan has had 1,000 years of plotting and planning how to finally defeat Christ, if he is ever released from the prison, but what Satan plans for evil, Christ turns around for good!

V 9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city [Jerusalem]: and fire came down from heaven, and devoured them.

This portion of scripture has caused many people great concern. They ask, "Why should Satan be released for a short season? What purpose could God have in unchaining the monster after 1,000 years of blessed peace?" The answer is simple: "The free will of man."

All the persons who enter the Millennium are redeemed people (Isaiah 60:21 and Joel 2:28). However, we must remember that procreation still takes place during this era of time, because those who survived the Tribulations hour enter the Millennium with human bodies. The believers sitting on the thrones possess resurrected bodies and do not bear children, but the others do. Consequently, the children born during this one-thousand-year period are born with the old Adamic, or sin nature, which has been an inherent part of man ever since the fall of Adam and Eve.

Many of them, of course accept Christ as their personal Saviour, but many do not! In addition, since Satan is bound, there is little to tempt them. They simply do not face the problems and trials which have confronted mankind in past ages. Satan's release then, is to determine whether or not Christ is real to these children of Millennium birth, or whether they have been submissive, because Christ ruled *with a rod of iron* (Rev. 19:15).

The truth is revealed, as millions follow the devil! Yes, even after living in the presence of Jesus Christ for 1,000 years, much of mankind rebels. Verses 8 & 9 informs us that Satan deceives the nations internationally (pictured as the four corners of the earth), and gathers them together for one last battle. The army is gigantic in number … *as the sand of the sea.* Once again, the camp of God's people ~ the beloved city of Jerusalem ~ is surrounded, just as the armies of the Tribulation hour gathered against Jerusalem to battle (Zechariah 14:1). Then, in an instant, God (the Father) destroys them all with a devouring fire from heaven. To whom does the names Gog and Magog refer? In Ezekiel chapters 38 & 39 they refer to Russia, but not so in verse 8 above.

Instead, they most likely indicate the memory of past brutalities ~ such as the names *Pearl Harbour, Hiroshima, Iraq, and Afghanistan* do today.

As Gog and Magog (Russia) invades Israel and comes against Jerusalem during the Tribulation hour, such an indelible impression is left upon all-of the world that now, 1,000 years later ~ the details are still vivid in people's minds. Thus, this past war, fought in the same area, is brought to mind as Satan once again attempts to destroy Israel.

V 10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

This is the end of the deceiver of the ages. He is cast into the place *prepared for the devil, and his angels* (Matthew 25:41). Many centuries were required for this slanderous culprit to reach his final destination. Now that he has arrived, he will experience nothing but continual torment ~ *day and night ~ for ever and ever. Amen!*

We have to stop here and address an important issue, because many people ~ Christians included ~ believe a misconception about hell. Whenever they see or hear the term, they picture a place, where a little red-suited gremlin stokes the fires and torments his victims with a pitchfork.

Satan is neither the stoker, nor does he torment his followers ~ and, as we have seen, he does not enter hell until after the Millennium.

As we have already learned, Satan is the *god of this world* [system] (2 Corinthians 4:4), *the prince of the air* (Ephesians 2:2), and the ruler of heaven, levels one and two ~ the aerial and stellar heavens. He retains that position until he is cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-9). He then reigns on the earth for the final 42 months of the Tribulation period.

Upon Christ's return to earth, Satan is bound in the *bottomless pit,* and then, following the Millennium period is released for a short period. Finally, he is cast into hell, or *the lake of fire and brimstone*, where he is tormented for all-of eternity. An understanding of these truth is essential to both victorious living and correct interpretation of the Book of Revelation.

Now we come to the most awesome portion of Scripture in the entire Bible ~ the judgement of the wicked.

V 11. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away: and there was found no place for them.

V 12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.

V 13. And the sea gave up their dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man according to their works.

V 14. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

V 15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Again, John says; *I Saw!* This statement is made thirty-seven times in the Book of Revelation. What a privilege was his! This time he views the gloomiest hour of history ~ the judgement of the wicked ~ as well as Christ sitting upon *a white throne.* White is the symbol of purity, justice, and holiness in scripture. *Thou your sins be as scarlet; they shall be white as snow* (Isaiah 1:18). *His wife has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white* (Rev. 19:7-8).

Since "white' stands for all that is honourable and right, what does it symbolize? Integrity for Christ, who is the *Truth* (John 14:6), is Himself the Judge. Notice the phrase is the *Great White Throne. This picture of a "Great Judgement"* that is about to fall on those who have rejected the "so Great Salvation" question (Hebrews 2:3).

How does one know that gentle Jesus meek and mild, the tender loving Jesus, is the One who sits upon the throne as Judge? The answer is found in John 5:22; *For "the Father," judges no man, but has committed all judgement unto the Son.*

Again, the Father has given him authority to execute judgement also, because his is the Son of man (John 5:27). The One raised from the dead~ the Lord Jesus Christ ~ is the Judge, according to Acts 17:31. [For] *he has appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained: whereof he has given assurance unto all men, in that he has raised him from the dead.* That moment is now before us!

What a solemn scene, as un-regenerate mankind comes face-to-face with God for the investigation of all-of their evil deeds.

Every transgressor is present: presidents, and paupers, high society snobs and skid row derelicts. Yes, this group includes every Christ-rejector of the ages, small and great, rich, and poor, free and slave. *Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have good, unto the resurrection of life* [the first resurrection]; *and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation* [the resurrection for judgement] (John 5:25-29). Make no mistake about it, *there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both the just and the unjust* (Acts 24:15).

As the unsaved stand before a holy God, the books are opened. Yes, God has a record of all-of the wicked deed sinners have ever committed ~ nothing remains hidden. Adultery, abortion, drunkenness, drug addition, harlotry, hatred, lawlessness, murder, rebellion, sexual promiscuity, wife-swapping, and every other abominable practice is then exposed in detail.

How is all this possible? God is both omniscient (all knowing) and omnipotent (all-powerful). The psalmist said in Psalm 139:1-2, *O Lord, thou has searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and my uprising.* God knows everything about every member of the human race. God adds, *I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them* (Ezekiel 11:5) I know when you have eyes *full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin* (2 Peter 2:14). I know when your tongue is about to curse; *For there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether* (Psalm 139:4). *I the Lord search the heart* (Jeremiah 17:10). This statement is extremely important; *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies* (Matthew 15:19).

God's books will be totally accurate, because He sees every move that humans make. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth* (2 Chronicles 16:9). *All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do* (Hebrews 4:13). That aborted foetus flushed into oblivion, that sex act in the parked car, or motel room, that crooked deal for illegal gain ~ everything is indelibly inscribed in the journal of the Almighty bookkeeper. One cannot hide anything from God whoever He may be! Furthermore, no mistakes will be made, for the dead shall be judged *out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* We also see that every unbeliever will be present, for the bodies come forth from land and sea, and the souls come from Hades (or hell). Then, their body, soul and spirit are re-united to stand before God.

Many have never realised that here is a time when the wicked ones are released from hell. This is not a new doctrine, or man-made theory.

The New Testament contains two Greek words ~*Hades & Gehenna.* Both of these Greek words are translated "hell" in the English Bible. The Lord Jesus Christ used both words repeatedly. Why two words? Are there two places? YES! A simple illustration helps us understand the difference between the two places.

Everyone understands the difference between the "local jail" and the "penitentiary". When a person is arrested for a crime and charged, He is placed into the "local jail" until his trail. When he is found guilty of the crime, the judge decides the sentence to be carried out by the offender, and he is then transferred to the "penitentiary" to serve out his sentence.

The next statement is important: When Jesus used the word, *Hades;* He was referring to the "local jail" ~ the place where the sinner is bound until the Judgement morning. Then, on Judgement Day, the sinner comes out of the local jail, (*Hades),* stands before the Judge (the Lord Jesus Himself), is found guilty, and is subsequently transferred to the final penitentiary of souls *(Gehenna).* The lake of fire is usually synonymous with *Gehenna.*

There are twelve instances where Jesus mentioned Hades and they are as follows: Matthew 11:23, 16:18; Luke 10:15, 16:22,23; Acts 2:27, 2:31; 1 Corinthians 15:55; Revelation 1:18, 6:8, 20:13, 20:14.

Gehenna is also mentioned twelve times by the Saviour. Matthew 5:22, 5:29, 5:30, 10:28, 18:9, 23:15, 23:33; Mark 9:43, 9:45, 9:47: Luke 12:5, and James 3:6. After studying the abovementioned texts, one can now understand verses 13 & 14 of Revelation chapter 20 more clearly, it makes perfect sense: *Death* [the grave] *and hell* [Hades] *delivered up their dead which were in them.* The plural pronoun "them" indicates two places: *the grave* and *Hades* ~ one for the body and the other for the soul. Next, *they were judged every man according to his works* (that's the trial). *Then death and* [Hades – Greek] *were cast into the lake of fire* [Gehenna ~ the final penitentiary].

Why are they transferred? *Gehenna* differs from *Hades* in that *Gehenna* is a place where there are different degrees of punishment. After one have been examined and judged, as to how much light the hand (How often he heard the salvation message and rejected it), he is assigned to *Gehenna* where there are degrees of suffering, according to one's light and works. Thus, the final "hell" will differ for all, depending on one's evil deeds and the number of times he rejected Christ's offer of love.

Based upon the above, we now understand Romans 2:5 a little better: *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasured up* [stored up, saved up] *unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath.* This is why *it shall be more tolerable* [more bearable, more endurable] *for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement, than for* [Capernaum] (Matthew 11:24). What was Capernaum's sin? Capernaum had greater light since Christ visited the city, and preached to her citizens. This is why the Pharisees *receive the greater damnation* (Matthew 23:14). They knew the Old Testament, they knew that the Messiah would come, they heard Him preach/teach with authority, they saw the miracles, **and yet they still rejected his offer of love and salvation.**

Clearly, sinners are raised from *death & Hades,* judged by Christ at the Great White Throne, and then transferred to *Gehenna.* The "good news" is that none of this happens to those who are trusting in the merits of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. When one trusts in Jesus Christ, his name is written in *the Lamb's Book of Life.* The judgement just discussed is only for those whose names are NOT found inscribed in the book (Rev. 20:15). If one is saved, he need never be concerned about hell as his eternal destiny, for *he that believes on* [Christ] *is not condemned* (John 3:18). *He is also passed from death unto life* (John 5:24). Thus, *there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus* (Romans 8:1). Amen!

The Great Judgement is only for those who participate in the final resurrection, which occurs after the 1,000-year or millennium reign of Christ upon the earth. Those who were raised prior to the Millennium are eternally secure, *for blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has not power* (Rev. 20:6)

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: THE NEW JERUSALEM

The final two chapters of the Book of Revelation presents the glorious future which awaits every believer of ALL DISPENSATIONS & AGES. The eternal state of both the saved believers and the lost is described in the first 8 verses of this chapter. In addition, verses 9 through 27 presents a glowing description of the New Creation. This view is absolutely breathtaking.

V 1. And I saw a New Heaven and a New earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

The passing away of the first (existing) heaven and (existing) earth occurred at the conclusion of the Great White Throne Judgement. This was part of the renovation of the world which Jesus predicted in Matthew 24:35, when He said *Heaven and earth shall pass away.* The time and method are described in 2 Peter 3:7,10-13. Therefore, read these words carefully; *The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men.*

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall all pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness; Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Note in this scripture, Peter describes something that we have not seen on the earth ~ fire burning in space ~ fire burning in a vacuum.

In the new world, the sea is eliminated, therefore no islands. Possibly this is because the connotation that the sea is associated with wickedness: *The wicked are like the trouble sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt* (Isaiah 57:20). Another reason is the oceanic vegetation is no longer needed, or necessary.

V 2. And I, John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Two Jerusalems are mentioned in Scripture (Galatians 4:25-26 and Hebrews 12:22). One is earthly and home to the believers during the Millennium period. The other, is heavenly ~ as the New Jerusalem, or the celestial city, which hovers over the earth during the 1,000-year Millennium reign of Christ and then descends and becomes eternally situated upon the earth at the end of the one-thousand-year period.

Revelation 21:1-8 actually follows AFTER Revelation 21:9-15. This is one time, when the chronological outline of the book of Revelation is different. This New Jerusalem, is undoubtedly the one that Christ has been preparing for 2,000 years, for the Saviour said in John 14:12, *I go to prepare a place for you.* This magnificent masterpiece descending towards earth reminds us of the elegant beauty, of a bride on her wedding day.

V 3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying; Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God Himself, shall be with them, and shall be their God.

To this point in time, God's tabernacle has been located in heaven. Now we discover that there is a change of address. God Almighty descends to the earth, with His heavenly entourage, settling in the New Jerusalem, to begin global operations from this satellite city. Thus, the scriptures in Isaiah are fulfilled ~ Emmanuel; All three parts of the Godhead are now with us on the earth.

The redeemed ~ in their glorified bodies ~ live in the New Jerusalem. Those with bodies of flesh ~ those who were born and saved during the millennial period ~ enter the eternal state with their "natural bodies". They live on the earth, in and under the light of the Holy city (Rev. 21:24). The true beauty of the entire scene is that God dwells in-the-midst-of His people, for a voice cries; *For behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them, and be their God.*

Another exciting fact is that believers, with glorified bodies, will be able to travel as fast as the speed of light, yes, as fast as their thoughts. Thus, they will travel back and forth from earth to their home in space above the earth ~ the New Jerusalem ~ in a moment of time.

V 4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death: neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be anymore pain: for the former things are passed away.

This verse should be a favourite among God's people. Just think of it! No more Pain, sorrow, crying, and death, as these are eliminated in the land of eternal life. This as mentioned in verse two, is only true after the millennium when Christ's kingdom is recommissioned and established on the earth. No wonder the redeemed are able to shout: *O, Death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?* (1 Corinthians 15:55). Never again will a funeral procession take place, for death, the last enemy, will have been destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26). Everything associated with death is also eliminated for time and eternity. Therefore, no more disease, heart attacks, automobile accidents, wars, or rumours of wars. "IT IS FINISHED!" is truly the national anthem of eternity.

The greatest thing about this chapter is that the believers, the Lord's people see His face (Rev. 22:4). In addition, sin has ceased, because Satan is eternally incarcerated in Gehenna, the *lake of fire* (Rev. 20:10). A new day, in a new heaven, suspended above a new earth has arrived because …

V 5. He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I will make all things new. And he said unto me; Write, for these words are true and faithful.

V 6. And he said unto me; It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

God speaks to John, saying; *It is done.* As Christ completed His redemptive work for sinners on the cross, He cried; *IT IS FINISHED!* Now God, who has made all things new, again announces; *IT IS FINISHED,* or done! His will have been accomplished in Jesus Christ ~ namely, that the earth should be free from the curse of sin, and that its inhabitants should be conformed to his very likeness. This has happened. *It is done!* God adds, *I AM* [the] *Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the end.*

We know that Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, but what does this statement really mean? In Christ all creation began without sin (Colossians 1:15-19), and now in Christ, it has ended without sin.

In this glorious city ~ the New Jerusalem ~ the spiritual thirst of God's people is eternally satisfied. While on the earth, Jesus said to the woman of Samaria: *Whosoever drinks of this water* [from the well] *shall thirst again, but whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life* (John 4:13-14). That time has now come, and God states: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." It is yours to possess throughout the ages. Enjoy yourselves!

However, make no mistake about it! The eternal prize of being in the continual presence of God in the New Jerusalem, where there is no more death, sorrow, crying, pain, thirst, or wars, is only for those who trust in the merits of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

V 7. He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Who is the overcomer? The one who believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (1 John 5:4). Oh, therefore, be SURE of your salvation, because the next verse mentions the motley group of sinners who miss the eternal paradise upon earth.

V 8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

This text plainly states that those who were condemned at the Judgement of Rev. 20: 11-15, have been cast into *the lake of fire (Gehenna).* There is no appeal, and they were not given any reprieve, a commuted sentence, or a second chance ~ as some sentimentalists teach. No! Revelation chapter 21 is an eternal state. No more changes are possible. Those who stood before God's Great White Throne did not make it. Who are they?

1. ***The fearful ~*** those who rejected Christ, to escape the ridicule of men.
2. ***The unbelieving ~*** those who rejected the doctrine of Christ's deity and shed blood, as the only means of obtaining eternal life. Jesus said: *You shall die in your sins … if you believe not that I am he* [or that I am God] (John 8:24). In John 5:40, the Saviour again said; *You will not come to me, that you may have life.*
3. ***The abominable ~*** Those who engaged in wicked practises. They spoke the language of Christendom ~ **<u>but never lived it!</u>** *They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate* (Titus 1:16).
4. ***The murderers ~*** Including those who carried hatred in their hearts and minds for others. If you don't believe it, then read the following scripture CAREFULLY: W*HOSOEVER, hates*

his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him (1 John 3:15).

5. ***The whoremongers ~*** who engaged in fornication (pre-marital sex), adultery (extra marital flings), or perverted sex.
6. ***The sorcerers ~*** Those who practise drug use for "kicks" and "highs".
7. ***The Idolaters ~*** Those who worshipped or revered anyone, or anything, other than the living true God, or who used idols in worship. Remember God's warning; *Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*
8. ***All Liars ~*** Those who have deceived others, distorted the truth, and destroyed mankind by lies.

V 9. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying; Come hither, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Here one member of the angelic host, which administered the final seven judgements now speaks to John, saying, "Come here. I want to show you the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the one who *made herself ready* [in] *fine linen, clean and white* (Rev. 19:7-8) and who returns with Him for the 1,000-year honeymoon (Rev. 19:11-16). At this point the bride is envisioned in her final resting place.

V 10. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

The bride is pictured as the city of the New Jerusalem because the city is composed of people. Buildings, streets, and lights are but aids to the residents. For example: one refers to a city as "clean" or "wicked". Why? Because of the people who live there. Now, as John views God's heavenly creation, he is impressed by:

(1) The brilliance of the city; (Rev. 21:9-14);
(2) The size of the city (Rev. 21:15-17);
(3) The beauty of the city (Rev. 21:18-21.

He describes the city as follows …

V 11. Having the glory of God and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

V 12. And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates; and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel:

V 13. On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

V 14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

In Biblical times wall were erected around cities for protection. However, since wars are forever finished, one may question why a wall is needed in the city of New Jerusalem. The answer: It reminds the people that God's love protected His people whilst on the earth. This wall is an eternal memorial to the fact that our lives have been hidden with *Christ in God* (Colossians 3:3).

The city has twelve gates, each inscribed with one of the names of the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel. One must remember that in Revelation chapter 7, the name of tribe of Dan is not mentioned, as one of the tribes who are selected to have 12,000 members sealed with the name of God, to be part of the 144,000 evangelists, who go out to tell the world that Jesus is the Real Messiah. There is conjecture whether the same list of names from Chapter 7, will be the list used for the Gates on the New City of Jerusalem.

The 12 gates are staffed by 12 angels, who welcome those possessing the right and privilege of entering the city (Rev. 22:14). The 12 angels standing at these entrances are possibly those who worked jointly with each tribe during their earthly sojourn of the people of Israel. We note that as the gates are inscribed with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel, the foundations of the walls

contain the names of Christ's 12 apostles. Here again, one must assume that the name of Judas Iscariot (THE TRAITOR, *the son of perdition*) is replaced with the name of Matthias.

Now let us examine the size of the city.

V 15. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure that city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

V 16. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as its breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and breadth, and height of it are equal. [It is a cube of 12,000 furlongs]

V 17. And he measured the wall thereof, and hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

The angel measures the city with a golden reed or measuring rod. Since the streets are made of gold, and the city is pure gold as well (Rev. 21:18), a golden yardstick is appropriate. (It is a good thing that thieves are excluded ~ (1 Corinthians 6:10) ~ otherwise the Holy City's freeways may disappear.)

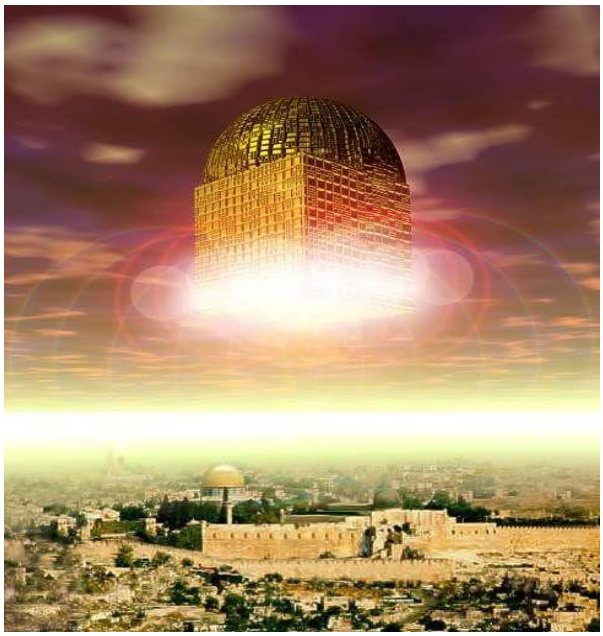
Verse 16 informs us that the New Jerusalem is tetragonal, or foursquare in shape. The city is a perfect cube, because its width, length, and height are equal. The angels reveals its dimensions to be 12,000 furlongs, or 1500 miles, in length, height, and width. This city is large enough to contain every living soul that has ever been born. The wall around the city is 216 feet high, when one assumes that the length of a cubit in 18 inches.

V 18. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

V 19. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper, the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

V 20. The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth, the twelfth, an amethyst.

V 21. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the streets of the city were pure gold, as it was transparent glass.



Notice that the wall of Jasper, represents Christ in His radiant glory, surrounding His saints. Next, the pure gold city represents the righteousness of God's holy nature, and then the precious colourful stones ~ startlingly brilliant~ pictures the Lord's attributes as well as various aspects of His redemptive works.

Imagine the scene when the Lord Jesus Christ ~ the light of the city (Rev. 21:23) shines through the brilliancy of those stones. When John's vision becomes a reality ~ then and only then will we begin to understand the term *the glory of God!* The beautiful city also pictures the saints of all-of the ages, joined together in love, for the names of the twelve tribes of Israel are coupled with the names of the apostles. This means that all-of God's people from ALL dispensations have finally joined together into one truly ecumenical brotherhood.

NO longer will be identified by our denominational tags, but we will all be identified as a united brethren ~ followers of Jesus Christ. What a glorious day, when we can lay aside eternally, the tags that so often divide us.

V 22. And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

On the earth, God always had a dwelling place, ~ a temple, or a tabernacle, where men could come to worship and commune with Him. Such a place is no longer needed, for the tabernacle of God is now with men. He has chosen to dwell with them (Rev. 21:3).

V 23. And the city has not need of the sun either, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it; and the Lamb is the light thereof.

While on the earth Jesus proclaimed; *I AM the light of the world* (John 8:12). Now, in the eternal city, Christ, in all His radiant splendour and glory, shines forth so magnificently, that darkness becomes and impossibility, and there shall be no night there.

V 24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

V 25. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

V 26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

These verses undoubtedly picture the multitudes who came through the Millennium as born-again, regenerated believers. They did not follow after Satan in the final rebellion, upon his release from the bottomless pit. Therefore, they entered the eternal state with bodies of flesh. Their rulers, kings, and presidents, also born-again, and still living in earthly bodies ~ now bring their glory and honour into the New Jerusalem as well. They come to praise Him who is all in all. As they arrive, there is no fear of assassination, recrimination, terrorism, or robbery. Such events are no longer possible. God is present! Satan is destroyed! Temptation is forever past. Thus, the gates of the city are never locked. Security, is needless in the land of eternal daylight, where there is no night. However, at this point, the warning flag is lifted.

V 27. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works, abomination, or makes a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

So, the angels' job is to prevent anyone entering into the Holy city which would defile it in anyway, and no-one whose names is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life!

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO: A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

The closing chapter of the Book of Revelation continues to describe the beautiful city ~ the New Jerusalem, and reaffirms that only those who possess the righteousness of Christ are granted admittance and residence.

V 1. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

V 2. And in-the-midst-of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manners of fruit, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for healing of the nations.

The first two verses of chapter 22 clearly establish the fact that, in our new, eternal, glorified bodies, we, as inhabitants of the Holy City, will continue to enjoy the habit of eating~ (but no junk food). Why not? When we see Jesus, *we shall be like him* (1 John 3:2). Since Jesus is in His glorified body (Luke 24:43), why wouldn't we? Our text also describes the best drink that we will ever enjoy ~ pure, refreshing water, direct from the throne of God. Think of it! Distilled or chemically treated water is not longer necessary, for pollution has become non-existent!

Not only do we have crystal clear water to drink, but we also have and enjoy delicious heath-producing fruit. In fact, the *tree of life* bears twelve different types of fruit, and bears them monthly. This is interesting.

When Adam and Eve sinned, by partaking of the fruit of the *tree of knowledge of good and evil* (Genesis 2:17), God drove them out of the Garden of Eden.

He then stationed an angel at the entrance to prevent them from eating from the *tree of life*, otherwise if they ate of it, they would have lived eternally in their sinful state, and there could be no redemption for them.

Now a new day has arrived. The saints are in the very presence of God, and may eat of *the tree of life* to their heart's content. Undoubtedly, this tree plays a part in promoting one's endless existence, for even the leaves contain healing or health for the nations living under, or in the light of, the city. The word *health* is the proper translation, not *healing*. Since there is no sorrow, sickness, or pain, healing is unnecessary, because eternal health is for all. In the heavenly city, doctors, nurses, and morticians, are permanently retired. Hallelujah!

V 3. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

The curse, which originated in the Garden of Eden and was partially removed during the Millennium, is now obliterated.

V 4. And they shall see His face; and His name shall be on their foreheads.

Think of it! We will observe the beauty of His Holiness daily, as we live in His presence forever and ever. When we look on the One who is altogether lovely and He, in turn, looks on us (His inheritance), He will observe His name indelibly inscribed upon our foreheads. This is our seal of eternal ownership! Oh, how wonderful to eternally belong to Jesus!

V 5. And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle; neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Because Christ in all His glory, illuminates the whole city and its inhabitants ~ those who walk in the light of the city ~ no other form of natural or artificial light is necessary. Even the sun, which warmed the former earth, for many centuries is no longer necessary. The warmth of the love of God shines upon His people for the ages of ages in this land of eternal day.

V 6. And he said unto me; These sayings are faithful and true; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servant the things which must shortly be done.

At this point the angel tells John the reason that God has allowed him to experience this vision of the revelation. He says: "The God of the Holy Prophets who is truth and cannot lie, sent me to tell you that the things you have heard and seen must come to pass speedily."

V 7. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keeps the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

In verse 6, our Lord told John that the things written in this Book of Revelation must shortly be done or "come to pass speedily." Then He adds in verse 7, *Behold, I come quickly* [or speedily]. The term speedily, is not used in relationship to time ~ hours, days, months, or even years. Rather, it speaks of a series of event happening in rapid succession, once they begin. In other words, when these things begin to come to pass (Luke 21:28) the signs and events will fall into place speedily (like a line of dominoes) ~ one after another ~ that a state of preparedness and readiness must be maintained. Hence, the admonition: *Blessed* [or happy to be envied] *is he that keeps the sayings of the prophecy of this book.* Such an individual will be ready for the Lord's return.

That is why it is so important to be teaching out of this book, in every pulpit, in every church in the world right now!

V 8. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things.

V 9. Then said he unto me; See thou do it not: for I am only thy fellow servant, and of they brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God!

Poor mortals never learn! John has already made the mistake of bowing before an angel and being rebuked for it in Rev. 19:10. Now He does it again! Fortunately, we have a God of love! He is willing to forgive our mistakes *seventy time seven* (Matthew 18:22).

Only by His grace, love, compassion, and forgiveness, are any of us able to continue. Thank you, Lord Jesus!

V 10. And he said unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

Following God's revelation to Daniel, the prophet was told to *seal the book* [until] *the time of the end* (Daniel 12:4). John however, is forbidden from sealing the Book of Revelation because *the time is at hand,* or has come. In the Greek, the word *time* is *Kairos,* and means opportune moment", or "correct season." Thus, the angel is actually saying, "The time for the revealing of prophetic truth has come. People are to be made aware of the future. They must learn the history of the churches and the plan of the ages. Then, as they live in these periods of time, they will understand God's program. They will also realise that, once these events begin, they will speedily come to pass. Knowing this, they will prepare. Therefore, do not seal the prophecy of the sayings of this book."

Our study has revealed that the Rapture, the tribulation Hour, and the Great White Throne Judgement will soon come to pass. As a result, some will realise that little time is left and will ask Jesus to save them. Others will continue to harden their hearts. The decision is for every individual to make. One's acceptance of rejection of God's truth and the Lord Jesus Christ as one's personal Saviour, will determine where one spends eternity and what one will be forever. Hence, the next statement ...

V 11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy: let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous; let him be righteous still; and he that is holy; let him be holy still.

Choose this day what you shall be eternally!

V 12. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man, according as his work shall be.

God's prophetic time clock is ticking, and every event will certainly and speedily come to pass.

V 13. I AM the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

God is saying: "When I come, I will finish the work of redemption which I began, for I AM the Alpha and Omega, *the author and finisher of* [the] *faith* (Hebrews 12:2)." If you receive the gospel invitation, you will be happy ...

V 14. Blessed are they that do the commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

V 15. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loves and makes a lie.

This is a crowd picture of Rev. 21:8, The *dogs* are identified as the *abominable* of chapter 21. The abominable never lived the Christian life (Titus 1:16). And the dogs went back to their dirt. ~ their old sinful ways (2 Peter 2:22). Both verses speak of individuals who lack the born-again, new-life experience ~ the one and only way a person can become a new creation in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). There is absolutely no doubt about the destiny of those who reject God's message and the truths revealed in the Book of Revelation, for ...

V 16. I, Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

The message of the revelation is true because Christ inaugurated and guarantees it. Who would dare question him? In this verse, the Lord also calls himself the root and offspring of David. As the root, He is David's Lord ~ the pre-existent God (Psalm 110:1). As his offspring, He is David's son, the incarnate Christ (Matthew 22:41-46). This is a beautiful picture of the God-man, The Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is also *the bright and morning star*. In fact, Peter calls Him *the day star* (2 Peter 1:19). Now listen intently, for this is deeply moving.

God so loves sinners that his compassionate heart must extend the gospel call one last time before the book closes.

Oh, that modern-day ministers were as evangelistic as the Heavenly Father! Hear Him!!!

V 17. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that hears, say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

In this text God compassionately declares; "Believe in Me; come to ME. Invite ME into your heart and live. You have everything to gain, and nothing at all to lose. Everyone and everything is pulling for you; (1) The Holy Spirit; (2) the Bride of Christ; (3) everyone who hears and believe, is (4) the glorious city in which the bride dwells is saying, 'Don't you want me for your eternal home?' Finally, (5) Your own spiritual thirst is crying out, 'I want to be satisfied."' Why not come and drink? The water of life is free. It is without cost, or obligation for everyone, and *whosoever will* may come!

If you have rejected this invitation, if you have considered the message of the Book of Revelation unimportant. Or if you are among those who believe that the Book of Revelation is not part of the canon of Scripture ~ that it is but a collection of riddles, simply a symbolic hoax perpetrating a myth ~ **BEWARE!** For God Himself warns one and all …

V 18. For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book; If any man, shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

V 19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

What a strong Judgemental warning! What a serious admonition from the Almighty to take the Book of Revelation seriously! **GOD MEANS WHAT HE SAYS & SAYS WHAT HE MEANS!** One is not to meddle with or handle the truths which mean so much to the God of Heaven and earth, for …

V 20. He which testifies these things says; Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.

God's last promise as the Book of Revelation closes is; *Surely, I come quickly.* When one see the beginning of the events, and the rapid succession of signs following speedily, Jesus will come quickly ~ or suddenly. The response of His people is: AMEN! This expression literally means, *so be it,* (Jeremiah 11:5). And then they immediately add, *"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."*

The final message to the Church is that our Lord will return [READY OR NOT!]. Until that glorious event takes place and He calls us to Himself *in the twinkling of an* eye, my prayer for every born-again child of God reflects the Benediction of this blessed Book:

V 21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen!

APPENDIX 1: RESTORING THE BIBLICAL BOUNDARIES OF ISRAEL.

While the world has been glued to the TV, or their social media sites over the last 3 weeks, arguing about who owns what land, and who started the latest conflict between Hamas and Israel, and that there should be a **"TWO STATE SOLUTION"** there has been no mention about what the Bible says about **"the Biblical Boundaries of Israel" ~ "THE PROMISED LAND."**

The Bible clearly lays out the Biblical Boundaries of Israel, and maybe the World Leaders and the United Nations needs to carefully look at them, because there are warnings for nations that do not follow them, and God Almighty **has promised to severely punish any nation that has "stolen land for the nation of Israel".**

There are also promises for punishment, for any nation, which supports nations, that have stolen land from Israel as well.

In Genesis 15:18 and in 17:8 God Almighty gives the boundaries for the Nation of Israel, known as the Promised Land.

Over time, and because of their disobedience, these borders have been significantly reduced, as neighboring nations have stolen land, and now even complete nations are dwelling within the **"original Biblical Borders of Israel".**

The borders referred to are:

1. Dan is described in the Bible as the northernmost city of the Kingdom of Israel
2. Be'er Sheva is described in the Bible as the southernmost city settled by the Israelites. Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov all spent time in Be'er Sheva
3. The Nile River is Egypt's primary source of water. At the beginning of the Israelite's slavery in Egypt, Pharaoh commanded that all baby boys be thrown into the Nile (Exodus 1:22), and baby Moshe was placed in the Nile (Exodus 2:3) and drawn from the Nile (Exodus 2:5) when he could no longer be hidden from the Egyptians. The first two plagues the God brought upon the Egyptians also began in the Nile (Exodus 7:14-24), Exodus (7:26-8:11).
4. The Euphrates River is the longest river of Western Asia, and is one of the two defining rivers of Mesopotamia. According to the Bible, the Euphrates was one of four rivers whose source was a river flowing from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:14).

5. In the Book of Ezekiel chapters 35 & 36 God Almighty tells the Prophet that he has not forgotten His promises to Abraham, <u>and that He will destroy the nations who attacked Israel and stole their land.</u>
6. These nations are all destined to be destroyed completely, and their cities left as rubble, whilst the Nation of Israel will expand and the land will be turned from desert into a beautiful orchard, with a bountiful harvest.
7. However, **there is within these 2 chapters a warning for all the nations upon the earth**. **Any nation which mocks Israel, or aids a nation which mocks Israel, shall be severely dealt with by the Lord.**
8. So let us look at these subject chapters in detail.
9. The next picture shows the 12 Tribes of Israel and their boundaries. REMEMBER, THESE ARE THE BIBLICAL BOUNDARIES OF ISRAEL – NOT THE BORDERS TODAY & THESE ARE THE BOUNDARIES THAT WILL BE RESTORED.

The 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL BOUNDARIES

Now we know that God Almighty also promised to restore the nation of Israel in one day. Isaiah 66:7-8: *Before going into labour, she gave birth; before her pains came, she delivered a male child. Whoever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such a thing? Is a country born in one day? Is a nation brought forth all at once? For as soon as Tziyon went into labour, she brought forth her children.* [Stern's Complete Jewish Bible]. That prophesy came to pass on the 14th May 1948, some 74 years ago.

Amos 9:11-15: [New King James Version]

Israel Will Be Restored

11 "On that day I will raise up The [a]tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And [b]repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old;
12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom,[c] And all the Gentiles who are called by My name," Says the LORD who does this thing.
13 "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "When the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And, all the hills shall flow *with it.*
14 I will bring back the captives of My People Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit *them;* They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.

[15] I will plant them in their land, And, no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them," says the LORD your God.
It is exciting as this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, but it will happen, because God Almighty never, ever, breaks His promises.

APPENDIX 2: ABOUT THE COVER.

The following story was related to the 6th Asian Convention of the Full Gospel Businessmen International in Singapore, in April 1987 by Rev. David Pawson.
A lady was on a flight from the USA to UK and the plane passed through a severe storm. The people inside the plane became very afraid and the crew had difficulty convincing the passengers that there was nothing to be afraid of, everything would be OK. The lady noticed that one other person was not afraid, but was sitting calmly reading a bible. She went to the other person and identified herself as a Christian and the two people began to pray to the Lord together. They remembered that in a similar situation, the disciples were in a boat and a severe storm blew up on the Sea of Galilee and that the disciples became very afraid, but the Lord stood up and spoke to the wind and to the sea and it became calm.

They claimed the promises of the scriptures that the Lord could do today what He had done in previous times and prayed that the Lord would come and calm the storm. Immediately after they prayed a special calm came over the people in the plane and they seemed to lose all their fears, but the storm outside the plane continued. The lady found this to be quite strange so she took a picture through the window of the plane of the lightning and the storm outside the plane and upon arrival in UK put the film in for developing.

When the film was developed, she received a request to come and pick up the film personally as the owner of the store wanted to ask her some questions about her pictures. The owner, who was not a Christian, asked her where she had taken this particular picture. Up until the time she saw the picture developed the lady did not know what she would see on the picture, except the lightning.

When she saw the picture and realised that it was a picture of Jesus Christ, she recounted the story of the storm and the events leading up to the taking of the particular picture. The photographer realised that it was a genuine picture and he believed in the miracle power of Jesus Christ and accepted Him as his Lord and Saviour. In using this picture on the front of this book I want you to think about what you have read throughout this book, and how this proves that Jesus Christ is real, He cares for all people who trust in Him, and He wants you to put your trust in Him also.

APPENDIX 3: CHECKLIST FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN LEFT BEHIND

ITEM	SIGN + OR -	THE ONE WORLD CHURCH	YOU ~ THE ONE LEFT BEHIND
When the TRUE CHURCH disappeared, did you re-think your teachings and doctrines about Jesus Christ? [Rev. 4:1]			
Did you repent and ask for forgiveness and change your ways, knowing what was now ahead of you? [The 21 judgements], as described in in Revelation chapters 6 to 19.			
After the **6th Seal was opened**, and God called **"the FIRST Time Out"**, did you ask for forgiveness, and asked to be included as part of the Tribulation Saints? Or: see next question>>>			
Or: Did you harden your heart and start cursing God?			
After the **6th Trumpet was sounded,** and God called "the **Second Time Out"**, did you ask for forgiveness, and asked to be included as part of the Tribulation Saints? Or: see next question>>>			
Or: Did you harden your heart and start cursing God?			
After the **6th Vial (Bowl) Judgement was poured out,** and God called "the **Third Time Out",** did you ask for forgiveness, and asked to be included as part of the Tribulation Saints? Or: see next question>>>			
Or: Did you harden your heart and start cursing God?			
When you read in Rev. 19:9 that Jesus has a list of people who will not be admitted into Heaven, **was you name and lifestyle on that list?** Did you ask for forgiveness, and asked to be included as part of the Tribulation Saints? Or: see next question>>>			
Or: Did you harden your heart and start cursing God?			
After the True Church was taken into heaven, to be the Bride of Christ, Jesus gave you THREE more chances, to ask for forgiveness, and join Him in Heaven. Do you think that Jesus was being merciful in doing this?			
Did you take him up on His offer? I EARNESTLY PRAY THAT YOU DO NOW ~ BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!!!			
If you did not, do you realise that you are going to hell?			
TOTALS: FOR THOSE LEFT BEHIND			

LIST OF PUBLISHED BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Here is a list of my published books and Bible College Course Notes, with links to allow you to read them online, or download them free of charge:

7 PILLARS OF CHRISTIANITY
https://www.scribd.com/.../1506.../7-Pillars-of-Christianity
A CRY IN THE WILDERNESS
https://www.scribd.com/.../150642352/A-Cry-in-the-Wilderness
AS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH
https://www.scribd.com/document/479169892
BE HEARERS AND DOERS OF GOD'S WORD
https://www.scribd.com/.../Be-Hearers-Doers-of-God-s-Word
COMMENTARY - BOOK OF ROMANS
https://www.scribd.com/.../3898.../Commentary-Book-of-Romans

GETTING CLOSER TO GOD - THE PRAYER SERIES
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ON THE POTTER'S WHEEL - AGAIN!
https://www.scribd.com/.../On-the-Potter-s-Wheel-Again...
ON THE WINGS OF ANGELS
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THE CALL OF GOD ON YOU - IDENTIFYING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS
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THE COASTAL PIONEERS - REVISED EDITION
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THE FINGER OF GOD - IS POINTING AT YOU
https://www.scribd.com/document/150643339
THE FIRE OF GOD
https://www.scribd.com/document/389806537/The-Fire-of-God
THE GIFTS, OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
https://www.scribd.com/.../The-Gifts-Operations...
THE GREAT INTERCESSORS
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THE MARTYRS CRY OUT
https://www.scribd.com/doc/234364286/The-Martyrs-Cry-Out...
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https://www.scribd.com/document/150643433/Thy-Word-is-Truth
WALK HUMBLY BEFORE YOUR GOD
https://www.scribd.com/.../Walk-Humbly-Before-Your-God
RECOVERING THE BIBLICAL BORDERS OF ISRAEL
Recovering The Biblical Borders of Israel | Book Of Exodus | Israelites (scribd.com)
COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH & LAMENTATIONS
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COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL.
A Commentary On The Book of Ezekiel | PDF | Ezekiel | Babylonian Captivity (scribd.com)

BIBLE COLLEGE COURSE NOTES WITH LINKS:

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